

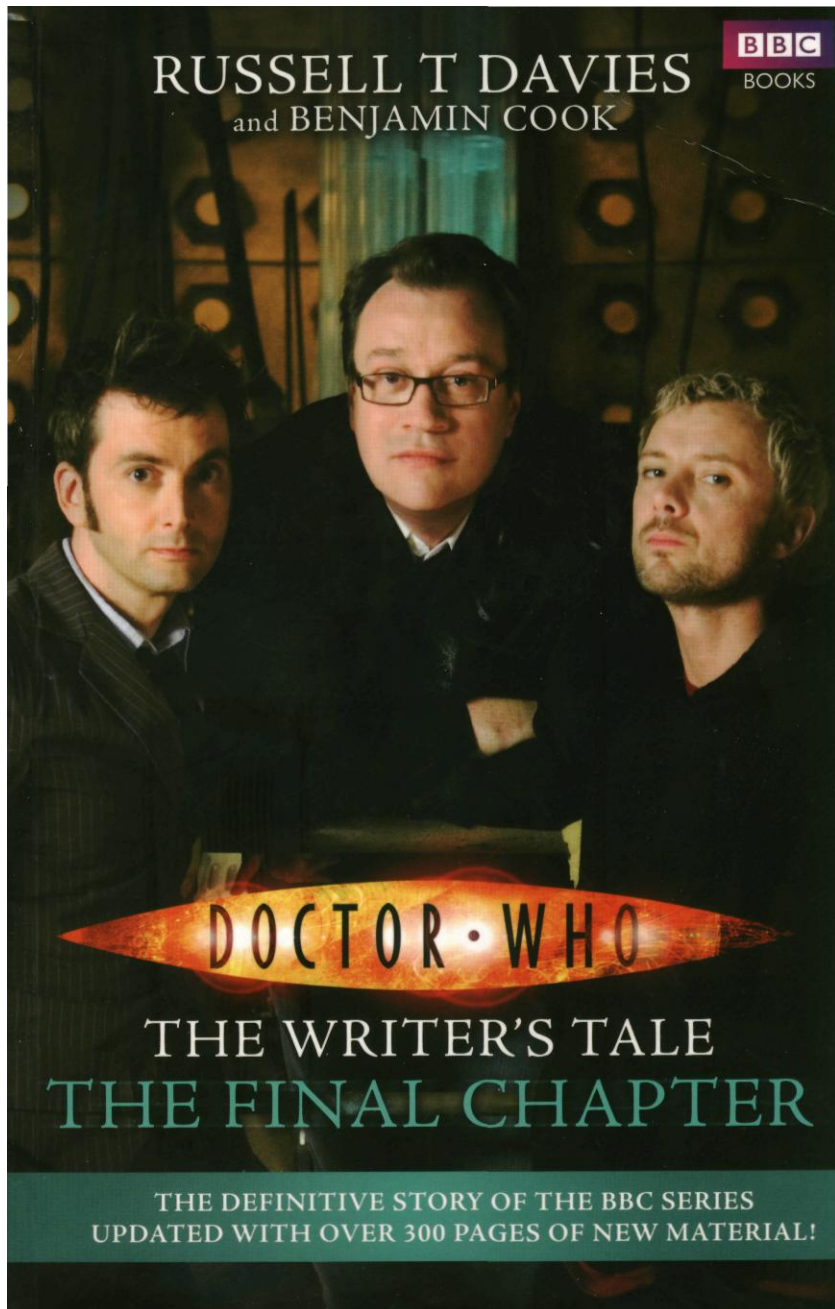
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2010

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
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RUSSELL T DAVIES
and BENJAMIN COOK



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1. The first step is to identify the problem.

2.

3. The next step is to analyze the problem.

4. The third step is to develop a solution.

5. The fourth step is to implement the solution.

6.

7. The fifth step is to evaluate the solution.

8. The sixth step is to monitor the solution.

9. The seventh step is to maintain the solution.

10. The eighth step is to improve the solution.

11. The ninth step is to document the solution.

12. The tenth step is to communicate the solution.

13. The eleventh step is to evaluate the results.

14. The twelfth step is to monitor the results.

15. The thirteenth step is to maintain the results.

16.

17. The fourteenth step is to improve the results.

18. The fifteenth step is to document the results.

19. The sixteenth step is to communicate the results.

20. The seventeenth step is to evaluate the results.

21. The eighteenth step is to monitor the results.

22. The nineteenth step is to maintain the results.

23. The twentieth step is to improve the results.

24. The twenty-first step is to document the results.

25. The twenty-second step is to communicate the results.

26. The twenty-third step is to evaluate the results.

27. The twenty-fourth step is to monitor the results.

28. The twenty-fifth step is to maintain the results.

29. The twenty-sixth step is to improve the results.

30. The twenty-seventh step is to document the results.

31.

32. The twenty-eighth step is to communicate the results.

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ISBN 978-1-4302-1000-0

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'Many writers dismiss the idea of
inspiration outright, simply stating their
formula for wild success as "apply seat of
pants to seat of chair". The Writer's Tale does
several impossible things, one of which is to
unravel the complexity of that very act'

Thorn Hutchinson, DEATH RAY MAGAZINE

'Probably the best book ever written about scriptwriting.

It's certainly one of the clearest windows into
a writer's mind' Douglas McPherson,

WRITERS' FORUM MAGAZINE

'I can't recommend The Writer's Tale highly enough...

It's a genuine insight into the entire
television production process'

Scott Matthewman, THE STAGE

'This book is a treasury of wit, of truthfulness,
and of good sound storytelling sense'

PHILIP PULLMAN

THE WRITER'S TALE

'Far from just being a piece of national
CHAPTER THE FINAL

treasure, it's one of the most precious
bundles of educational platinum that any



writer could set their lamps on. It reads like
an adventure, like real writing ought to'

PAUL ABBOTT

T got my copy in Waterstone's yesterday. Five
pounds off! Not that I cared, cos I stole it'

STEVEN MOFFAT

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DOCTOR · WHO

THE WRITER'S TALE
THE FINAL CHAPTER

The definitive story of the BBC series

RUSSELL T DAVIES
and BENJAMIN COOK



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A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ISBN 978 1 84607861 3 KEY TO

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1:
Commissioning Editor:
Albert DePetrillo
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Tribe DEFINITELY MAYBE
(18.02.07-06.03.07) 30
Designer: Clayton
Hickman *In which Mika is inspiring, Skins is disappointing, and Russell performs a triple loop on ice*
Cover design: Clayton Hickman
Production Controller: Phil
Spencer Chapter 2:
Printed and bound in the UK by CPI Mackays, Chatham ME5
8TD CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS
(06.03.07-15.04.07) 60BBC Books would like to thank the
following for providing photographs and for permission to reproduce copyright material. *In which Kylie Minogue sings the Muppets, Russell turns down a fifth series of Doctor Who, and* While every effort has been made to trace and acknowledge all copyright holders, we would like to apologise should there *Charlie Kaufman is told to sod off*

have been any errors or omissions.

3:

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1: BASTARDS

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pi (right) and p2 (left) courtesy of the Doctor Who Art Department p3

(below left) © Darenote Ltd. Photographer William

Baker *In which The People's Quiz is shunted, the internet is slated, and one beautiful day with Wynnie la*

p4 (top, above left, above right) courtesy of William

Baker *Freak makes everything worthwhile*

p5 (below) computer-generated imagery courtesy of The Mill

p6 (top) courtesy of Benjamin

Cook Chapter 4:

p6 (above left, above right) courtesy of Jennie Fava

p7 (below right) courtesy of Clayton

Hickman INT. SPACESHIP

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p8 courtesy of Adrian Rogers

Plate section 2:

which George Lucas is snubbed, Charlie Hunnam's arse is discussed, and the Controller of BBC

p2 (left) courtesy of Indigo Television/

ITV1



One puts his foot in it

p4 (below) courtesy of Benjamin Cook

5:

Front cover photography by Adrian Rogers

Illustrations by Russell T

Davies THE REWRITER'S TALE

which Buckingham Palace is saved, Kylie Minogue plays gooseberry, and Kasabian narrowly avoid

in a tent

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waves a gun about

which a double-decker bus is crushed, a space captain shoots herself, and Matt Smith sings the

Who theme down the phone from Starbucks

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Chapter 23:

FOR

GALLIFREY

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ROAD

TO

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PULLMANIn which the Doctor's mother is inspired by Chris Rea, Rassilon loses a diamond in the dark, and the

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never met Russell T Davies, but I like him, from the T on outwards. He stealsChapter 25:

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In which middle-aged men end up crying in Boots, blue breast-enhancers are the new pink, and

Russell pirouettes for the Eleventh Doctor

652

the best, which proves that he is both discriminating and unscrupulous; he

adventurous and humane, not a common combination; and most of all he's full

a boundless energy, which fizzles out of these pages like champagne. He's a

maker. Everybody knows Doctor Who, and Queer as Folk, and Torchwood.

made a difference: they have stamped his authority on the TV screen for a longWORKS

REFERENCED

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to come. My favourite among his stories is Mine All Mine, for the simple reason thatINDEX

was charming, and it confirmed my long-held view that the Welsh are the sexiest

in the world.

what's this book about? Specifically, it's about the writing - and the re-writing, and

the

talking about, and the thinking about, and the arguing about the scripts for a series of

Who.

it's not the theme that's important. What matters are the insights and the and illuminating comments that crop up on the way, as Davies examines the whole of storytelling. Take the theme itself. Davies says -- and he's dead right -- 'Maybe when bad scripts are written, when you choose the theme first. I consider that I've to say when I've thought about a person, a moment, a single beat of the heart, I think is true and interesting, and therefore should be seen.'

true of novels, stage plays, films, short stories -- any narrative that's made up in to illuminate a theme has a quality of duty rather than joy. It's what Yeats called the will do the work of the imagination.

also right - by which I mean, of course, that his opinion coincides with mine - on subject of writers block: I don't know why, but I sort of react with revulsion to that I imagine it to mean sitting there with No Ideas At All. For me, it feels more like ideas just won't take the right shape or form.'

pugnacious, and rightly so, when faced with narrow-minded prejudice: the key is to defend the work, because I think defence always sounds like an apology, but to go the attack.' But he's also sensitive to the difficulties less experienced writers face when

to deal, for example, with the relentless and merciless idiocy of internet 'criticism'.

Doctor

Howe

vivid

business

that's

some

that

That!

order

making

He's

the

phrase

the

He's

'not

on

trying

attitude is, again, mine, and therefore resonantly true: 'Creating something is not
democracy. The people have no say. The artist does. It doesn't matter what the
on about: they and their response come after. They're not there for the creation.'
fact, not only is Russell T Davies a great TV writer , a vigorous and creative

His

a

witter

In

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producer, a wise and perceptive commentator on the profound business of storytelling, INTRODUCTION and I dare say (I have never met him) a figure of godlike and unearthly personal beauty,

he is probably omniscient. Reading this excellent book I was more than once put

in mind of the old song 'Abdul the Bulbul Amir'. The Bulbul's opponent in that epic

conflict was Ivan Skivinsky Skivar, who 'could imitate Irving, play poker or pool, and RUSSELL T DAVIES perform on the Spanish guitar.'

Such a man is Russell T Davies. This book is a treasury of wit, of truthfulness, and of

can't drive, so I get a lot of taxis. Which means that five or six times a week I good sound storytelling sense, and well worth stealing from.

PHILIP PULLMAN

May 2008

I have this conversation: 'So what do you do then?' 'I work on Doctor Who.' 'As what? Are you one of the monsters?' 'No, ha ha, that's funny. No, I'm a writer.' 'Oh, right, nice.' Pause, and then, every time, here it comes... 'So where d'you get your ideas from?' At that point, I normally say that I buy them from The Ideas Shop in Abergavenny. But in fairness, it's a good question. With no good answer. Writers never talk about this. You'll see us, in script meetings, talking about plot and character and motivation; you'll see us in the bar, talking about contracts and rivals and fonts; you'll see us in the gutter, complaining about money. (With all of us, all the time, wondering

when the good luck will run out.) But the actual writing... oh no, no way ,
no one
talks about that. Like it's sacrosanct. Or just too scary to look at.
But
Benjamin Cook wanted to know! And wouldn't give up. So that's what we've tried
to pin
down here. The ideas. Those mad, stupid, vague, shape-shifting, hot, nagging,
drive-
you-barmy ideas. And as the idea for this book grew - you'll see it grow, on the
page
- then
it gave me the chance to tackle another thing that was bugging me. Writing is such
an
industry now. In many ways, that's a good thing, in that it removes all the muse-
like
mystique
and makes it a plain old job, accessible to everyone. But with industry comes
jargon.
I was aware that jargon was starting to fill those growing shelves of Writer's Self
Help
books, not to mention the blogosphere. Wherever I looked, the writing of a script
was
being reduced to A, B, C plots, Text and Subtext, Three Act Structure and blah,
blah,
blah.
And I'd think, that's not what writing is! Writing's inside your head! It's thinking!
It's
every
hour of the day, every day of your life, a constant storm of pictures and voices and
sometimes,
if you're very, very lucky, insight.
That's
what I wanted to capture here, and that's why so much of this book is written
at
2am, in the dark hours, when the storm's a-blowing and the rafters creak. It's not
writing
in theory; it's writing in action, in motion. In anguish! Ideas written down
before
anyone else could sit in judgement, or before I could reconsider them in the cold
light of

day.

I

wonder. You might be surprised. It does get a bit wretched and an gst-ridden at

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times. (Steven Moffat, Doctor Who's next showrunner, read the manuscript and said, INTRODUCTION

'If you still want to be a writer after reading this, then you probably will be.') But for

me, that's what writing is, coupled with the enormous joy of actually getting something

made. Ben and I tried to capture the process live and unfiltered, in e-mails, and when

it came to publishing this, we didn't go back and tidy up. We've tried to leave it as BENJAMIN COOK

instinctive, impulsive and contradictory as... well, as the inside of your head. Okay,

all right, we did go through the finished text to remove the scandal (3,000 words,

including My Night With The Slitheen), the lies (2,000 words, including my belief love that image of this correspondence surviving a nuclear war,' Russell T

that Arthur Miller nicked my idea for The Crucible) and the swearing (28,000 words, Davies told me back in April 2007, two months into what would become

including some brand new ones), but, apart from that, we left it intact, to make it as a two-and-a-half-year-long exchange of e-mails and text messages. The last

honest as possible. Oh yes, and we removed one or two secrets about the future, because remnant of civilisation. "It's... glowing!"

Doctor Who is an ongoing show, and hopefully always will be, for ever. In the beginning, the Great

Correspondence was supposed to be a

To see writing in motion, means writing as work - a real, proper

get Doctor Who the Bard would have balked at the prospect of
reviving a TV show in 2005 that was last

made, alongside the brilliant teams at Doctor Who Confidential and
the Website, and popular in the '80s - decreasingly so at that - and
transforming it into The Best Thing On

Branding, and... oh, the thanks could fill a whole book. Albeit a rather
dry book. Telly Bar None. And I bet Shakespeare wouldn't have
agreed to e-mail me his scripts as he

But right here and now, I just want to say thank you to Ebury, for
having faith in us, wrote them, page by page, night by night, and then
answer a barrage of questions about

and to Philip Pullman, for his wonderful words, with special thanks to
Ben, for the idea, how he did it, how he's feeling about it, and what he's
going to write next. (Shakespeare

the support, the kindness and the friendship, and to Andrew Smith,
the man who's probably couldn't even work a computer. What an
idiot.)

hardly mentioned in here, because he's part of a different world, one
which keeps me Anyway, people seemed to quite like The Writer's
Tale. I mean, other people. People who

sane and makes the whole thing
possible. weren't Russell or me.
(We'd been calling it the 'Great' Correspondence since February

Oh, and then, by the way, the taxi driver always says, 'So do you
think up the story 2007 - ooh, the reckless optimism of youth!') The
critics said nice things. Richard and Judy

and the actors make up the words?' I've gotta learn to
drive. chose it for their Christmas Book Club.
Revered newspaper columnist Charlie Brooker

was
inspired to devote an entire edition of his BBC show Screenwipe to
interviews with

RUSSELL T
DAVIES TV writers. And the man who produces and writes for
CBBC's talking cactus Oucho (see

July 2008

p.226)

wrote us a letter to say that The Writer's Tale is one of his all-time
favourite books.

And
if you ever want to interview the cactus,' he said, 'give me a call.' Okay.
Thanks.

At
which point, we began to wonder whether some sort of follow-up volume
might

not
be an altogether terrible idea. We were, after all, still e-mailing, Russell and I.
Like

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cockroaches that had survived the fallout. ('It's... glowing!') Or should we quit while

we're ahead? A second time around, we'd be all too aware that our e-mails would actually

be published, and read, by real people. Would we play up to our prospective readership?

Look at me, would-be reader! Look at me! Or get woefully shy, and self-conscious, and

tongue-tied? Would Book Two turn out to be an appalling piece of fluff?

Well, no. The *Writer's Tale: The Final Chapter* extends the Great Correspondence to

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

2009, and the new material - 135,000 words' worth, across 350 pages,

kicking off in March 2008 - is as candid, as honest, as impulsive and as revealing as Book

The

Writer's Tale: The Final Chapter would not have been possible without the invaluable One... which, by the way, is thrown in for good measure. Topics in Book Two include the

help

of some wonderful people. For giving us permission to include them in this killing of Lanto Jones, the preposterously secret Operation Cobra, an ABBA/ Torchwood

book,

heartfelt thanks to Paul Abbott, Pete Bennett, Pete Bowker, Chris Chibnall, crossover, slagging off Prince Charles, the resurrection of Gallifrey, the arrival of Matt

Will

Cohen, Phil Collinson, Bryan Elsley, Phil Ford, Mark Gatiss, Murray Gold, Smith as the Eleventh Doctor, and Russell's departure for foreign shores. The original

Bob

Harris, Anne Jowett, Joe Lidster, Steven Moffat, Caitlin Moran, Andy Pryor, *Writer's Tale* even feeds back into the TV series. Keep an eye on the abandoned 'Alien

Helen

Raynor, Gareth Roberts, Nicola Shindler, John Simm, Tracie Simpson, David Watch' idea from Chapter 1.

Tennant

and Piers Wenger. Special thanks to James Moran, for giving us permission

The original book reproduced Russell's scripts for Voyage of the Damned, Partners in

to talk through the rewriting process. For photographic material, design drawings and *Crime, The Stolen Earth and Journeys End*, in pre-first-draft form. But we wanted to give

other illustrations, thanks to Lindsey Alford, Jennie Fava, Samantha Hall, Arwel Jones, over as much of this paperback edition as possible to new material, so the scripts have

Brian Minchin, Jess Van Niekerk, Matt McKinney, James North, Adrian Rogers, Tom largely been removed. Instead, the polished, shooting scripts for these episodes - along

Spilsbury at Doctor Who Magazine, and Alex Thompson and Dave Turbitt at BBC with Midnight, Turn Left, The Next Doctor, and the 2009 Specials - can be downloaded

Worldwide Further thanks to Philip Pullman, Catherine Tate, Bernard Cribbins, Jill from our website (www.thewriterstale.com) for free!

Atfield, Susie Liggett, Nikki Wilson, Bethan Evans at The Agency, Albert De Petrillo

Right. A few thank yous. Big thanks to Chris Costello, Max Letek, George Archer (he

and the lovely Ed Griffiths at Ebury, the tireless Steve Tribe, the brilliant Clayton of the octopus tattoo - see Chapter 21), Nicky Lane and Adam Conway. More people are

Hickman, and the incredible Julie Gardner. thanked in the Acknowledgements section opposite, but you'll only read that if there's a

possibility you're one of them (you narcissist), so I'd like to single out Clayton Hickman,

for his top-notch design work; Steve Tribe, for his extraordinary diligence; and Julie

Gardner, without whom this book - and, frankly, the last five years' worth of Doctor Who

- *wouldn't have happened.*

In my Introduction to the original Writer's Tale, I reserved my biggest thank you for

Russell himself- 'for engaging with this project so passionately, so thoughtfully and so

honestly, for not telling me to sod off at the start, and for capturing the madness, the fun

and the struggle of writing. For telling it How It Is. Even the stuff that contradicts the

other stuff.' Well, that all pretty much stands. Except I'd like to add that it takes a special

kind of genius to make something - something like Doctor Who - that means so much to

so many people. And you have, Russell. Never forget it. I mean that.

So then, here it is - The Writer's Tale 2. The final chapter. The end of an era. (Not, as

Russell once suggested, 'the end of an error -- the misanthropist!') The last remnant of

civilisation. Better than Shakespeare. Beloved by cactuses. ('God bless the cactuses!') It's

absolutely, definitely, defiantly, the GREAT Correspondence.

BENJAMIN COOK

December 2009

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1.1 Rose (Russell T Davies)
1.2 The End of the World (Russell T Davies)
1.3 The Unquiet Dead (Mark Gatiss)
1.4 Aliens of London (Russell T Davies)
1.5 World War Three (Russell T Davies)
1.6 Dalek (Robert Shearman)
1.7 The Long Game (Russell T Davies)
1.8 Father's Day (Paul Cornell)
1.9 The Empty Child (Steven Moffat)
1.10 The Doctor Dances (Steven Moffat)

Boom Town (Russell T Davies) 1.11

Bad Wolf (Russell T Davies) 1.12

The Parting of the Ways (Russell T Davies) 1.13

The Christmas Invasion (Russell T Davies) 2.X

New Earth (Russell T Davies) 2.1

Tooth and Claw (Russell T Davies) 2.2

School Reunion (Toby Whithouse) 2.3

The Girl in the Fireplace (Steven Moffat) 2.4

Rise of the Cybermen (Tom MacRae) 2.5

The Age of Steel (Tom MacRae) 2.6

The Idiot's Lantern (Mark Gatiss) 2.7

The Impossible Planet (Matt Jones) 2.8

The Satan Pit (Matt Jones) 2.9

Love & Monsters (Russell T Davies) 2.10
Fear Her (Matthew Graham) 2.11

Army of Ghosts (Russell T Davies) 2.12
Doomsday (Russell T Davies) 2.13
The Runaway Bride (Russell T Davies) 3.X
Smith and Jones (Russell T Davies) 3.1
The Shakespeare Code (Gareth Roberts) 3.2
Gridlock (Russell T Davies) 3.3
Daleks in Manhattan (Helen Raynor) 3.4
Evolution of the

Daleks (Helen Raynor)3.5 The Lazarus Experiment (Stephen Greenhorn)3.6 42 (Chris Chibnall)3.7 Human Nature (Paul Cornell)3.8 The Family of Blood (Paul Cornell)3.9 Blink (Steven Moffat)3.10 Utopia (Russell T Davies)3.11 The Sound of Drums (Russell T Davies)3.12 Last of the Time Lords (Russell T Davies)3.13 Voyage of the Damned (Russell T Davies)4.X Partners in Crime (Russell T Davies)4.1 The Fires of Pompeii (James Moran)4.3 Planet of the Ood (Keith Temple)4.2 The Sontaran Stratagem (Helen Raynor)4.4

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4.5 The Poison Sky (Helen Raynor) On The Sarah Jane Adventures, the production codes pertaining to specific episodes4.6 The Doctor's Daughter (Stephen Greenhorn) are as follows:4.7 The Unicorn and the Wasp (Gareth Roberts) 1.X Invasion of the Bane (Russell T Davies & Gareth Roberts)4.9 Silence in the Library (Steven Moffat) 1.1 Revenge of the Slitheen: Part One (Gareth Roberts)4.10 Forest of the Dead (Steven Moffat) 1.2 Revenge of the Slitheen: Part Two (Gareth Roberts)4.8 Midnight (Russell T Davies) 1.3 Eye of the Gorgon: Part One (Phil Ford)4.11 Turn Left (Russell T Davies) 1.4 Eye of the Gorgon: Part Two (Phil Ford)4.12 The Stolen Earth (Russell T Davies) 1.5 Warriors of Kudlak: Part One (Phil Gladwin)4.13 Journey's End (Russell T Davies) 1.6 Warriors of Kudlak: Part Two (Phil Gladwin)4.14 The Next Doctor (Russell T Davies) 1.7 Whatever Happened to Sarah Jane? Part One (Gareth Roberts)4.15 Planet of the Dead (Russell T Davies & Gareth Roberts) 1.8 Whatever Happened to Sarah Jane? Part Two (Gareth Roberts)4.16 The Waters of Mars (Russell T Davies & Phil Ford) 1.9 The Lost Boy: Part One (Phil Ford)4.17 The End of Time: Part One (Russell T Davies) 1.10 The Lost Boy: Part Two (Phil Ford)4.18 The End of Time: Part Two (Russell T Davies) 2.1 The Last Sontaran: Part One (Phil Ford)

2.2

The Last Sontaran: Part Two (Phil Ford)

N.B. The transmission order of Series Four was revised after the initial scripting stage,

2.3

The Day of the Clown: Part One (Phil Ford)but the production codes remained unchanged to avoid confusion.

2.4

The Day of the Clown: Part Two (Phil Ford)

On Torhwood, the production codes pertaining to specific episodes are as 2.5 Secrets of the Stars: Part One (Gareth Roberts)1.1 follows:

Secrets of the Stars: Part Two (Gareth Roberts)1.2 Everything Changes (Russell T Davies)

2.7 The Mark of the Besserker: Part One (Joseph Lidster)1.3 Day One (Chris

2.6

Chibnall) 2.8 The Mark of the
Beserker: Part Two (Joseph Lidster)1.4 Ghost Machine (Helen
Raynor) 2.9 The Temptation of
Sarah Jane Smith: Part One (Gareth Roberts)1.5 Cyberwoman (Chris
Chibnall) 2.10 The Temptation of
Sarah Jane Smith: Part Two (Gareth Roberts)1.6 Small Worlds (Perer J
Hammond) 2.11 Enemy of the Bane:
Part One (Phil Ford)1.7 Countrycide (Chris
Chibnall) 2.12 Enemy of the Bane:
Part Two (Phil Ford)1.8 Greeks Bearing Gifts (Toby
Whithouse) 3.1 Prisoner of the Judoon:
Part One (Phil Ford)

They	Keep	Killing
Suzie		3.2 Prisoner of the
Judoon: Part Two (Phil Ford)1.9	(Paul	Tomalin & Dan
McCulloch)		3.3 The Mad Woman in
the Attic: Part One (Joseph Lidster)1.10	Random	Shoes (Jacquetta
May)		3.4 The Mad Woman in the
Attic: Part Two (Joseph Lidster)1.11	Out of	Time (Catherine
Tregenna)		3.5 The Wedding of Sarah
Jane Smith: Part One (Gareth Roberts)1.12	Combat	(Noel
Clarke)		3.6 The Wedding of
Sarah Jane Smith: Part Two (Gareth Roberts)1.13	Captain Jack	Harkness (Catherine
Tregenna)		3.7 The Eternity Trap: Part One (Phil
Ford)2.1	End of	Days (Chris
Chibnall)		3.8 The Eternity Trap:
Part Two (Phil Ford)2.2	Kiss Kiss,	Bang Bang (Chris
Chibnall)		3.9 Mona Lisa's Revenge: Part
One (Phil Ford)2.3	Sleeper	(James
Moran)		3.10 Mona Lisa's
Revenge: Part Two (Phil Ford)2.4	To the	Last Man (Helen
Raynor)		3.11 The Gift: Part One
(Rupert	Laight)2.5	Meat (Catherine
Tregenna)		3.12 The Gift: Part
Two (Rupert Laight)2.6	Adam	(Catherine Tregenna)

2.7 Reset (JC Wilsher)

2.8 Dead Man Walking (Matt Jones)

2.9 A Day in the Death (Joseph Lidster)

2.10 Something Borrowed (Phil Ford)

2.11 From Out of the Rain (Peter J Hammond)

2.12 Adrift (Chris Chibnall)

2.13 Fragments (Chris Chibnall)

3.1 Exit Wounds (Chris Chibnall)

3.2 Children of Earth: Day One (Russell T Davies)

3.3 Children of Earth: Day Two (John Fay)

3.4 Children of Earth: Day Three (Russell T Davies & James Moran)

3.5 Children of Earth: Day Four (John Fay)

Children of Earth: Day Five (Russell T Davies)

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WHO'S WHO

WRITERSPaul Abbott - creator of TV shows *Clocking Off* Linda Green, *State of Play* and *Shameless*Douglas Adams -- 14 episodes of *Doctor Who* between 1978 and 1980, and script-edited the

show at the end of the 1970s; best known as the creator of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the*

Galaxy series (initially for radio, later novels and a TV series); died 2001
LindseyAlford - script editor on *Doctor Who Series Three and Four*, and *The Sarah Jane*

*Adventures*Sir Kingsley Amis - novelist, poet and critic; died 1995 **Peter Bowker** -- TV includes*Blackpool*, *The Canterbury Tales* and *Casualty* **Charlie Brooker** - comedian, presenter, *Guardian*columnist, and TV scriptwriter with credits

including *Dead Set* **Chris Chibnall** -- *Doctor Who* 3.7, and head writer on *Torchwood*Series One and Two (1.2,

1.4, 1.6, 1.13, 2.1,2.11, 2.12 and 2.13) **Paul Cornell** - *Doctor Who* 1.8 and 3.8/3.9**Richard Dawkins** - evolutionary biologist and popular science writer; cameoed as himself in

Doctor Who 4.12**Bryan Elsley** -- co-creator of and showrunner on *Skins* **Jane Espenson** - TV includes*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and

Battlestar Galactica **John Fay** - *Torchwood* 3.2 and 3.4 **Phil Ford**- *Doctor Who* 4.16 (with**Russell T Davies**), *Torchwood*2.9, and head writer of *The*

Sarah Jane Adventures (1.3/1.4, 1.9/1.10, 2.1/2.2, 2.3/2.4, 2.11/2.12, 3.1/3.2, 3.7/3.8 and

3.9/3.10)**Mark Gatiss** -- *Doctor Who* 1..3 and 2.7; also played **Professor Lazarus** in *Doctor Who* 3.6**Matthew Graham** - *Doctor Who* 2.11 **Stephen Greenhorn** -- *Doctor Who* 3.6 and 4.6 **Bob Harris**- TV includes *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*; books include *Prisoner ofTrebekistan*:

A Decade in Jeopardy! **Robert Holmes** - 64 episodes of *Doctor Who* between 1968 and 1986,and script-edited the

show in the mid 1970s; died 1986 **Matt Jones** - *Doctor Who* 2.8/2.9 and *Torchwood* 2.7;script editor on *Queer as Folk* and *Queer*

as Folk 2Stephen King - contemporary horror fiction, science fiction and fantasy, and screenplaysJoseph Lidster-- Torchwood2.8 and The Sarah Jane Adventures 2.7/2.8 and 3.3/3.4 TomMacRae - Doctor Who 2.5/2.6Jimmy McGovern -- creator of TV shows Cracker, The Lakes and The StreetRobert McKee -- screenwriting guruBrian Minchin - script editor on Doctor Who Series Four and Torchwood Steven Moffat -Doctor Who 1.9/1.10, 2.4, 3.10, 4.9/4.10 and Children in Need mini-episode

Time Crash, and Russell T Davies' replacement as showrunner on the 2010 series AlanMoore -- comic books include Watchmen, V for Vendetta and From Hell James Moran - DoctorWho 4.3 and Torchwood2.2 and (with Russell T Davies) 3.3 Peter Morgan - TV includes TheDeal and Longford; movies include The Queen, The Last King

of Scotland and the adaptation of his stage play Frost/Nixon Terry Nation - 56 episodes ofDoctor Who between 1963 and 1979; created the Daleks; died

1997 Philip Pullman - novels include the Sally Lockhart series and His Dark Materialstrilogy

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Helen Raynor - Doctor Who 3.4/3.5 and 4.4/4.5, Torchwood 1.3 and 2.3, and has script-edited Peter Davison - the Fifth Doctor in Doctor Who from 1981 to 1984 and 2007 mini-episode

Time

Crash

both shows Gareth Roberts - Doctor Who 3.2, 4.7, 4.15 (with Russell T Davies) and

2005s

interactive

Dame

Judi Dench - movies include Mrs Brown, Shakespeare in Love and the James Bond series

mini-episode Attack of the Graske, The Sarah Jane Adventures 1.X (with Davies), 1.1/1.2, Ian Dury- lead singer of Ian Dury and the Blockheads; played Mr Scott in a 1998 episode of

1.7/1.8, 2.5/2.6, 2.9/2.10, 3.5/3.6 and (with Clayton Hickman) Comic Relief mini-episode The Grand; died 2000

From Raxacoricofallapatorius with Love Gary Russell -- script editor on Doctor Who Christopher Eccleston -- Steve Baxter in The Second Coming and the Ninth Doctor in DoctorSeries Four, Torchwood and The Sarah Jane Who Series One

Adventures; author of behind-the-scenes books on Doctor Who Lee Evans - Malcolm in Doctor Who 4.15Robert Shearman - Doctor Who 1.6 Keith Temple - Doctor Who Janet Fielding - Tegan Jovanka in Doctor Who from 1981 to 19844.2

Sir

Michael Gambon - TV includes The Singing Detective; movies include the Harry Potter

series

Sean

Gilder -- the Sycorax Leader in Doctor Who 2.XACTORS

Kar

Gillan - A soothsayer in Doctor Who 4.3 and Amy Pond in the 2010 series of DoctorFreema Agyeman - Martha Jones in Doctor Who Series Three and Four, and 4.18, and Who

Torchwood2.6,

2.7

and

2.8

Aidan Gillen - Stuart Jones in Queer as Folk and Queer as Folk 2Annabelle Apsion - TV includes Soldier, Soldier, The Bill and Shameless Howard Attfield - Burn Gorman -- Owen Harper in Torchwood Series One and TwoGeoff Noble in

Doctor Who 3.X; died 2007 Rakie Ayola -- the Hostess in Doctor Who 4.8 Robson Green -- TV includes Soldier Soldier, Reckless and Touching EvilAnnette Badland - Blon Fel-Fotch Pasameer-Day Slitheen (Margaret Elaine) in Doctor Who Susan Hampshire -- Esme Harkness in The Grand

1.4/1.5

and

1.11

Mitch Hewer

- Maxxie Oliver in SkinsTom Baker - the Fourth Doctor in Doctor Who from 1974 to 1981 John Barrowman - Sir Anthony Hopkins - movies include The Elephant Man and The Silence of the LambsCaptain Jack Harkness in Doctor Who Series One, Three and Four, and Dennis Hopper -- movies include Blue Velvet, Speed, Apocalypse Now and Easy Rider

4.18,

and

Torchwood

Mark

Benton

-

Nicholas Hoult -- Tony

Stonem

in

SkinsClive

in

Doctor

Who

1.1

Glyn Houston -

Professor Owen Watson in 1976 Doctor Who serial The Hand of Fear andBrenda Blethyn -- movies include Secrets dr Lies, Little Voice and Atonement Claire Bloom - the Colonel Ben Wolsey in 1984 serial The AwakeningWoman (the Doctor's mother) in Doctor Who 4.17/4.18 Samantha Bond -- Mrs Wormwood

Charlie Hunnam -- Nathan Maloney in Queer as Folk and Queer as Folk 2in The Sarah Jane Adventures 1.X and 2.11/2.12.

Nicholas Briggs -- the voice of several monsters Jessica Hynes (nee Stevenson)

- Holly Vance in Bob & Rose, Joan Redfern in Doctor Who in Doctor Who and The Sarah Jane Adventures, most notably the Daleks, the Cybermen and the 3.8/3.9 and Verity Newman in Doctor Who 4.18Judoon; also played

Rick Yates MP in Torchwood Series Three Kathy Burke -- TV includes

David Jason - TV includes Open All Hours, Only Fools and Horses and A Touch of FrostHarry Enfield's Television Programme and Gimme Gimme Gimme,

Peter Kay - the Abzorbaloff in

Doctor Who 2.10

movies include Elizabeth and Kevin & Perry Go Large Simon Callow - Charles Dickens in Sinead Keenan - Addams in Doctor Who 4.17/4.18

Doctor Who 1.3 Peter Capaldi - Lobus Caecilius in Doctor Who 4.3 and John Frobisher in Craig Kelly -- Vince Tyler in Queer as Folk and Queer as Folk 2

Torchwood

Series

Sam Kelly

-TV includes 'Alia 'Alia! and Porridge

Three

Jacquel

King- Sylvia Noble in Doctor Who 3.X, Series Four and 4.17/4.18

Debbie Chazen - Big Claire in Mine All Mine and Foon Van Hoffin Doctor Who 4.X Chipo
Alex Kingston - River Song in Doctor Who 4.9/4.10

Chung - Chantho in Doctor Who 3.11 and the Fortune Teller in 4.11 Noel Clarke - Mickey
Tommy Knight -- Luke Smith in Doctor Who 4.12/4.13 and 4.18, and The Sarah Jane

Smith in Doctor Who Series One, Two and Four, and 4.18; also scripted
Adventures

Torchwood

1.11

Sarah

Lancashire -- Miss Foster in Doctor Who 4.1

Camille Coduri - Jackie Tyler in Doctor Who Series One, Two and Four, and 4.18
Angela Lansbury - TV includes Murder, She Wrote; movies include Beauty and the Beast

George Costigan -- Max Capricorn in 4.X Lindsey Coulson -- Val Cane in Doctor
Katy Manning -Jo Grant in Doctor Who from 1971 to 1973
James Marsters - Captain

Who

4.8

John

Hart in Torchwood 2.1,2.12 and 2.13 Sir Ian McKellen -- movies include the Lord of

Nicholas Courtney - Brigadier (formerly Colonel) Alistair Gordon Lethbridge-Stewart in
the Rings and X-Men trilogies Kylie Minogue -- pop star and actress; Astrid Peth in Doctor

Doctor Who from 1968 to 1989, reprising the role (as Brigadier Sir Alistair Lethbridge-
Who 4.X Dame Helen Mirren -- movies include Elizabeth /and The Queen Georgia Moffett

Stewart) in The Sarah Jane Adventures 2.11/2.12 Bernard Cribbins -Wilfred Mott in Doctor
- Jenny in Doctor Who 4.6 Colin Morgan -- Jethro in Doctor Who 4.8

Who 4.X, Series Four and 4.17/4.18, and Tom
Sir Roger Moore - movies include seven outings as James Bond; TV includes The Saint

Campbell in 1966 movie Daleks' Invasion Earth: 2150 A.D. Mackenzie Crook - TV
Naoko Mori - Toshiko Sato in Doctor Who 1.4 and Torchwood Series One and Two David

includes The Office, Demons and Skins; movies include the Pirates of
Morrissey - Jackson Lake ('the next Doctor') in Doctor Who 4.14 Eve Myles - Gwyneth in

the

Caribbean

series

Doctor Who 1.3,

and Gwen Cooper in Torchwood and Doctor Who

Timothy Dalton - the Time Lord President (Rassilon) in Doctor Who
4.17/4.18 4.12/4.13

Gareth David-Lloyd -- Ianto Jones in Torchwood and Doctor Who
4.12/4.13 Alan Gray O'Brien - Rickston Slade in Doctor Who
4.X

Davies -- Bob Gossage in Bob &
Rose Peter O'Toole -- Old
Casanova in Casanova

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Geoffrey Palmer - Edward Masters in 1970 Doctor Who serial Doctor Who and the Silurians, **Will Cohen - visual FX producer on Doctor Who**

Earth Administrator in 1972 serial The Mutants and Captain Hardaker in Doctor Who 4.X **Phil Collinson -- producer of Doctor Who Series One to Four****Francois Pandolfo -- Quintus Caecilius in Doctor Who 4.3 Lynne Perrie - Ivy Tilsley (later Mark Cossey -- executive producer on Doctor Who Confidential****Brennan) in Coronation Street, died 2006 Billie Piper -- Rose Tyler in Doctor Who Series One, Nick Elliott - Controller of Drama at ITV from 1995 to 2007****Two and Four, and 4.18 Amanda Redman - TV includes At Home with the Braithwaites and New Jennie Fava - second assistant director on Doctor Who 3.3, 3.6, Series Four and 4.14, assistant****Tricks Clive Rowe -- Morvin Van Hoff in Doctor Who 4.X Christopher Ryan - Lord Kiv in 1986** script editor on the 2009 Specials, and production manager on Children in Need mini-*Doctor Who* serial *The Trial of a Time Lord* and *Sontaran* episode *Time Crash*

Fincham - Controller of BBC One from 2005 to 2007 Jane Fletcher - BBC One's leader General Staal in Doctor Who 4.4/4.5

of Press from 2005 to 2007 Julie Gardner - BBC Wales' Head of Fiction and Drama,**Daniel Ryan -- Andy Lewis in Bob & Rose and Biff Cane in Doctor Who 4.8 Michelle Ryan**

executive producer of Doctor-- Lady Christina de Souza in Doctor Who 4.15 Colin Salmon - Dr Moon in Doctor Who

4.9/4.10 Lesley Sharp - Rose Cooper in Bob & Rose, Judith Roach in The Second Coming and *Who, Torchwood and The Sarah Jane Adventures* **Murray Gold - composer of Doctor Who's****Sky**

scores Neill Gorton -- special make-up and prosthetics designer on Doctor Who,

and *The*

Silvestry in Doctor Who 4.8

Jane Adventures **Michael Grade - Executive Chairman of ITV pic from 2007 to 2009;**

John Simm - the Master in Doctor Who 3.11, 3.12/3.13 and 4.17/4.18 Elisabeth Sladen -

Sarah Jane Smith in Doctor Who from 1973 to 1976, reprising the role in 1981 spin-off K9 dr formerly Controller of

Company, 1983 anniversary Special The Five Doctors and in Doctor Who 2.3,

4.12/4.13 and 4.18, BBC One (1984-1986), in which capacity he ordered an 18-month hiatus for Doctor Who

and The Sarah Jane Adventures Matt Smith -- the Eleventh Doctor in the 2010 series of Doctor **Sarah Harding - director of four episodes of Queer as Folk Graeme Harper -- director of six**

Who Brenda Strong -- Mary Alice Young in Desperate Housewives Kiefer Sutherland - TV episodes of Doctor Who during the 1980s, as well as Doctor

includes 24 Clive Swift -- Jobel in 1985 Doctor Who serial Revelation of the Daleks and Mr Copper *Who 2.5/2.6, 2.12/2.13, 3.7, 3.11, 4.2, 4.7, 4.11, 4.12/4.13, 4.15 and Children in Need*

in

Doctor mini-episode Time Crash

Harrison-Baxter -- producer of Bob dr Rose, The Second Coming and Mine All Mine

Who 4.X

Home - the BBC's Head of Children's Television from 1986 to 1997 Julian

Catherine Tate - Donna Noble in Doctor Who 3.X, Series Four and 4.17/4.18 Gwen Taylor --

- sound recordist on Doctor Who Series Three and Four, The Sarah Jane

TV includes Duty Free, Barbara and Heartbeat David Tennant -- Giacomo Casanova in Russell

Series Two, and Torchwood Series Three Jay Hunt - Controller of BBC One

T Davies" Casanova and the Tenth Doctor in

2008 Mike Jones -- editor on Doctor Who since Series One Verity Lambert - Doctor

Doctor Who Series Two, Three and Four, and the 2009 Specials Russell Tovey -

first producer, from 1963 to 1965; other TV producing credits

Midshipman Frame in Doctor Who 4.X and 4.18 David Troughton -- Private Moor in 1969

Adam Adamant Lives!, The Naked Civil Servant, Minder, Jonathan Creek and Love

Doctor Who serial The War Games, King Peladon in

died 2007 Susie Liggat - producer of Doctor Who 3.8/3.9, 4.2, 4.4/4.5, 4.7, 4.11

1972 serial The Curse of Peladon and Professor Hobbes in Doctor Who 4.8
Indira Varma-

4.14, and The

Suzie Costello in Torchwood 1.1 and 1.8 Jimmy Vee - Doctor Who credits
include the Moxx of

Jane Adventures LX Euros Lyn - director of Doctor Who 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, 2.4, 2.7, 2.11,
Balloon (1.2), the Space Pig (1.4) and

4.9/4.10, 4.17/4.18 and

Bannakaffalatta (4.X); The Sarah Jane Adventures credits include Carl
Slitheen (1.1/1.2), the

Children in Need mini-episode Born Again, and Torchwood Series Three Paul

Graske (1.7/1.8 and 2.9/2.10) and Nathan Slitheen (1.9/1.10) Julie Walters
- movies

-- TV producing credits include The Bill and Family Affairs; creator of
include Educating Rita, Billy Elliot, Mamma Mia! and the Harry Potter

Wives Charles Martin - director of The Sarah Jane Adventures 1.5/1.6 and
series
and two episodes

June Whitfield - Minnie Hooper in Doctor Who 4.17/4.18 Lee Williams -
TV includes of Skins Series Two

Teachers and The Forsyte Saga: To Let Penelope Wilton - Monica Gossage in Bob &
Rose and Charles McDougall - director of the first four episodes of
Queer as Folk

Harriet Jones in Doctor Who
1.4/1.5, Peter McKinstry --
concept artist on Doctor Who since Series Two

2X and
4.12 Louise
Page -- costume designer on Doctor Who Series Two to Four, and the 2009
Specials

Barbara Windsor - TV includes EastEnders; movies include the Carry On
series Kate Winslet - Andy Pryor -- casting director on Doctor Who and

Torchwood Tessa Ross -- Channel 4's Film

Reel in Dark Season; movies include Titanic, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless and Drama Controller Nicola Shindler - producer of Queer as Folk, Bob dr Rose and The Second

Mind and *Finding*
Neverland *Coming,* and
founder

independent TV drama production company Red Tracie Simpson -- production manager

PRODUCTION

Doctor Who Series One to Four; producer (along

Peter Bennett) of 4.15, 4.17/4.18 and the 2010 series Barbara Southcott - make-up

Jana Bennett - the BBC's Director of Vision since 2006 designer on Doctor Who since Series Three Richard Stokes - producer of Torchwood Series One

Peter Bennett - first assistant director on Doctor Who 1.12/1.13, 2.2, 2.4, 2.7,2.11, 3.X and and Two James Strong - director of Doctor Who 2.8/2.9, 3.4/3.5, 4.X, 4.1 and 4.15 Colin

4.17/4.18, and Torchwood 1.1 and 1.2; production manager on Doctor Who 4.6, 4.8 and **Teague- director of Doctor Who 3.12/3.13 and 4.3, Torchwood 1.3, 1.7, 2.2 and 2.4,**

4.12/4.13; producer of Torchwood Series Three and (along with Tracie Simpson) the 2010 and The Sarah Jane Adventures l.X Edward Thomas - production designer on Doctor Who,

series of Doctor
Who *Torchwood and*
The Sarah Jane Adventures

Matthew Bouch -- producer of The Sarah Jane Adventures Series One

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Mark Thompson - the BBC's Director-General

Jane Tranter - the BBC's Controller of Fiction from 2006 to 2008, who - as Head of Drama

-- oversaw the resurrection of Doctor Who in 2005 Jess Van Niekerk -- production co-

ordinator on Doctor Who Piers Wenger - Julie Gardner's replacement as BBC Wales' Head

of Drama and executive

producer of Doctor Who from the 2010 series onwards Nikki Wilson (nee Smith) -

producer of The Sarah Jane Adventures since Series Two, and

Doctor Who 4.15; script editor on Doctor Who 4.4/4.5 Tony

Wood - producer of The House of Windsor and The Grand

OTHERS

Benny Andersson - Swedish musician, composer and former member of 1970s/80s pop group

ABBA

William Baker - Kylie Minogue's creative director Russell Brand -- comedian, TV and radio

presenter and movie star Simon Cowell - A&R executive and TV producer; talent judge on

American Idol, The XFactor

and Britain's Got Talent

Matt Dawson - former England rugby player and captain Judy Finnigan - TV presenter and

(with husband Richard Madeley) former host of regular TV

chat shows

Jason Gardiner - choreographer and judge on Dancing on Ice Ed Griffiths -- Publicity

Manager at Ebury Publishing Rufus Hound - stand-up comedian and TV presenter Gethin

Jones -- TV presenter best known for a stint on Blue Peter, cameoed as himself in The

Sarah Jane Adventures L.X, and played a Cyberman in 2.6 and a Dalek in 4.13 Anne Jowett -

a Commissioning Editor at Radio Times magazine Jimmy Krankie -- one half of Scottish

husband-and-wife comedy due the Krankies Freddie Ljungberg -- Swedish footballer and

ONEunderwear model for Calvin Klein Richard Madeley - TV presenter and (with wife Judy

Finnigan) former host of regular TV

chat shows

McFly -- pop-rock band; cameoed as themselves in Doctor Who 3.12

Lee McQueen - winner of 'The Apprentice Series Four

Dannii Minogue - pop star and occasional actress; talent judge on TheXFactor

Chris Moyles -- radio DJ and TV broadcaster Kirsten O'Brien -- TV presenter and stand-up comic

Paul O'Grady - comedian and TV presenter; cameoed as himself in Doctor Who 4.12 Arlene

Phillips - choreographer, former dancer and judge on Strictly Come Dancing from 2004

to 2008

Chris Rea - singer/songwriter

Craig Revel Horwood - choreographer, former dancer and judge on Strictly Come Dancing

Jonathan Ross - comedian, film critic, and TV and radio presenter Britney Spears -- pop

star

Anthea Turner - TV presenter particularly known for Blue Peter, Top of the Pops and GMTV

Bjorn Ulvaeus - Swedish musician, composer and former member of 1970s/80s pop group

ABBA Richard Whiteley -- TV presenter and journalist, famous for hosting Channel Four

quiz show

Countdown; died 2005 Wynn timer -- Manchester-based drag queen;

appeared in Bob & Rose

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CHAPTER ONE

DEFINITELY

MAYBE

In which Mika is inspiring,
Skins is disappointing, and Russell
performs a triple loop on ice

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 18
FEBRUARY 2007 07:19:48 GMT

AN IDEA

I've been thinking. I know, I know, but I was feeling dangerous. How about a magazine

article on the writing of one or more of your Doctor Who scripts? The nuts and bolts of

the process, from start to finish. Developing the story, the characters, the dialogue. An

exploration of the painstaking creation process. What worked, what didn't, and why.

I think it'd be fascinating. Or would it be too intrusive? And is there enough time? I'd

want to chat to you about your ideas before you start writing (it could be this year's

Christmas Special, or Episode 1 of Series Four, or another episode altogether), and

exchange regular e-mails over the weeks and months that you spend scripting, honing,

and developing the episode(s). I'd need to read, discuss, and compare various drafts.

It'd be a unique and valuable look at the art of the television scriptwriter.

Thoughts?

P.S. Please say yes.

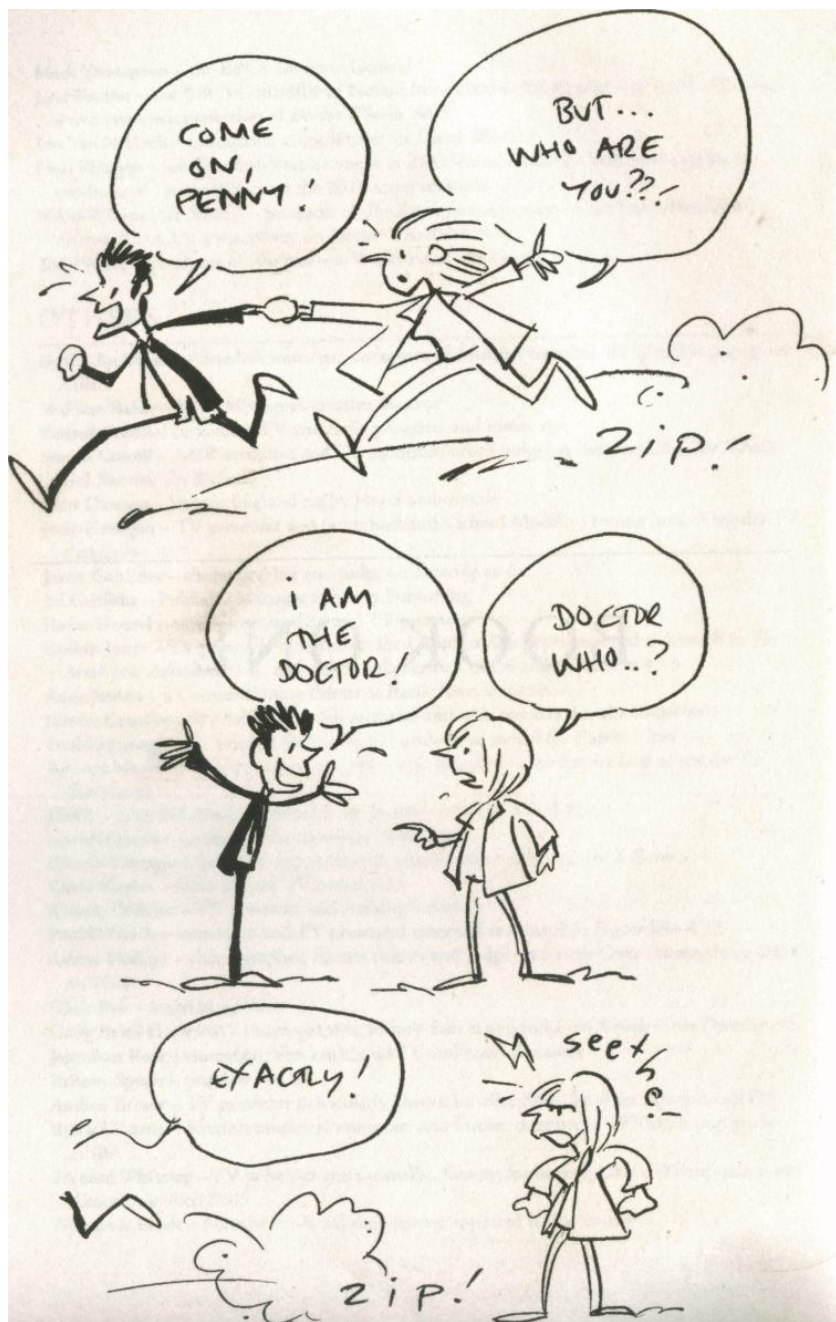
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 18
FEBRUARY 2007 12:41:59 GMT

RE: AN IDEA

Well, that's a yes, then. You had me at hello.

Morning, Benjamino! Look at you, typing at first
light on a Sunday. You're meant

to be waking up hung over in the bed of two
strangers called Hans and Milly. London



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world.

talk

about writing. Not ever. Even when I'm sitting there with Paul Abbott, getting

I filter through all those thoughts, but that's rarely sitting at my desk, if ever. It's drunk at three in the morning (long time since I did that -- friendships perish under

all done walking about, going to town, having tea and watching telly. The rest of the Doctor Who schedule), we might complain about deadlines and commissioners and

your life becomes just the surface, chattering away on top of the Maybe. It never directors... but never the actual writing. We guard it. Perhaps it truly is superstition.

turns off. (And bear in mind, the Maybe isn't just thinking about one episode. Right Like saying Candyman out loud.

now, today, I've skipped ahead to Series Four, Episode 12's problem: what do the Lost Would this year's Christmas Special script work? It's not a typical script: it has to be

People of Earth actually do*. And that'll go on for, oh, the next year or so, until I start big and blousy and Christmas Day-y. It's half script, half event. But I'm not sure about

writing it in November.) I can't begin to tell you the thousand problems and their the first episode of Series Four either, because that's introducing the Doctor's new

possible solutions, bubbling away at the same time. And the doubts. That's where this companion - I like the name Penny (do you like Penny?) -- and I might want to be left

job is knacker and debilitating. Everything - and I mean every story ever written alone for that. Plus, you can give away too much information. Maybe discussions about

anywhere - is underscored by the constant murmur of: this is rubbish, I am rubbish, a new companion, if put into print, would become part of fandom's rigid thinking.

and this is due in on Tuesday! The hardest part of writing is the writing. That actress would, in 20 years' time, still be asked in interviews, 'How do you feel

So, Ben, what I'm saying is: yes, let's do it (judging by how long I've gone on in this about the fact that you were originally conceived to be a blind Sumo lesbian?'

e-mail, we might even get a book out of it!), but so much of the process is invisible. Anyway, off to bed. Not because I'm tired, but because I'm reading a brilliant book,

When I start typing, those solutions lock in, and create the world of the story very fast

Prisoner

ofTrebekistan. The 'Tirebek' is Alex Trebek, who's presented the US quiz show

- which is terrifying, because you're always waiting for the inevitable day when... they

Jeopardy!

for over 20 years. It's the story of a man who dedicated his life to getting on

don't! Blimey, that'll happen. One day.

the

show. It's so brilliant, and so funny, and even heartbreaking in small and beautiful

The thing is, you'll have to fight me feeling superstitious about the writing process.

ways.

A man who's devoted to telly. No wonder I like it.

My trust in the Maybe feels almost superstitious. (Though I don't actually call it the

Maybe; I just made that up now. And I'm not even superstitious. I was born atheist,

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. MONDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2007
02:23:45 GMT

me.) In considering a script, I might feel that saying those early options out loud

RE:

AN IDEA

to you automatically makes them more fixed, and might unbalance things. It's new

Yes,

I like Penny.

territory, and that feels terrifying. Equally, so would the prospect of a night in with

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DOCTOR
TALE
ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S

SERIES FOUR - NAZIS

4.3

World War
II. Monsters on the loose In the Natural History Museum as a
Nazi **BREAKDOWN**

force invades. FIRST DRAFT SCRIPT AVAILABLE, but with changes to This
is the Series Four Breakdown, compiled by Russell for the
production come. The museum could be a London shoot for a few
days, if we can use the team early in 2007. 'It's such a scary document,
people might resign,' he interior of the Natural History Museum,
but we'll need Cardiff corridors and joked at the time. Episodes 4.X,
4.1, 4.11 and 4.12/4.13 were to be scripted by rooms as well, if they
can match. Plus, an Indiana Jones-type chamber hidden Russell, 4.2 by
Keith Temple, 4.3 by either Mark Gatiss (World War II)
or beneath, with sliding stone doors and stuff. James Moran
(Pompeii), 4.4/4.5 by Helen Raynor, 4.6 by Stephen Greenhorn,
4.7 by Gareth Roberts, 4.8 by Tom MacRae, and 4.9/4.10 by Steven
Moffat... OR!!!

I am
worried about recreating World War II again so soon. 3 This entire
script **4.X** - **STARSHIP**

TITANIC

could
be replaced by... The Titanic In Space crossed with The Poseidon
Adventure. The ship is on a

Christmas Cruise, gets hit by meteorites, and the Doctor and survivors
have **4.3 - POMPEII** to crawl through the
wreckage and find out who caused the sabotage, while God help
us! We could build a villa interior, some alien base inside the

volcano, stopping the ship hitting the Earth below. It's not a proper recreation of the and a CGI Vesuvius, smoke and lava and all that, and Fire People might be *Titanic*, it's more of a luxury hotel, with Olde Worlde trappings, plus Christmas possible... but the obvious worry is: we can stand in a bit of Welsh countryside decorations. The people on board, staff and passengers, aren't human; they're and look at a CGI Pompeii from a distance, but I don't know how we can just visiting, like a cruise ship to the Bahamas. I'd like a new, one-off, spiky- achieve any sort of exterior street/marketplace/whatever. We have to see faced little alien in black tie to be one of the survivors. Plus, the main monsters people running from those ashes! But let's talk about it, because it's possible are the ship's robot staff- Golden Angels, beautiful, male, blank-faced masks. that we can write a script around our parameters. For once! And 'Pompeii' is

1

Also, the Judoon stomp in at the end to arrest the villains. And there'll be a such an irresistible headline. trip down to Earth, to a night-time shopping street with Christmas decorations

- but it's deserted! No people. And maybe one scene on moorland at the end.

4.4/4.5 - SONTARANS

With snow. Gotta have snow. Martha calls the Doctor back home. 5 A huge British science project to repair

the ozone layer is being infiltrated by the Sontarans. Big, sprawling science

- NEW COMPANION

Maybe a military feel. These episodes might have quite a bit of military. The Doctor meets his new companion, they solve an alien threat, and then sail hardware, open battles between soldiers and Sontarans, guns, trucks, off together. Modern-day Earth. Possibly a CGI monster. explosions. It's war! Also, secret Sontaran chambers where they're mass-

cloning.

The science project involves some device being attached to 'Every

2

4.2 - PLANET OF THE OOD

Home in Britain',

like, say, a metal tube running from floor to gutter. Plus, back

A visit to their home planet, an ice-world, where the poor Ood are being sold to suburbia with the companion's family. into slavery by the human race. CGI-enhanced exteriors - wide-open vistas

covered in snow. Factories where Ood are processed. Posh PR-type offices,

4.6 - ALIEN PLANET

where the whole enterprise looks legit, but underneath are dark, grimy rooms The Doctor, Martha, and the new companion. It's not a huge-vistas world; it's



where the Ood are treated terribly. One huge warehouse space, full of Ood more contained. Maybe a broken-down world at war, huddled in bunkers, cages. Caves where the giant, pulsating, CGI Ood-brain is fermenting. Plus, a under fire. I'd love a new race of alien soldiers for this - all identical, like thesequence of a man transforming into an Ood. Ood. Battle-scarred grunts in flight-suit-like costumes. Also, Martha goes back

home at

the end of this episode, requiring one suburbia-type scene.

Who 1.9/1.10 were set during the Blitz.

1 The rhino-like Judoon, a race of mercenary police. first appeared in Doctor Who 4 A warrior race of dome-headed aliens, the Sorttarans featured in four Doctor Who serials between 1973 and

3.1.

1985

2 The subservient Ood debuted in Doctor Who 2.8. 5 Martha Jones (played by Freema Agyeman) was the Doctor's travelling companion throughout Series Three.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE			

4.7	-	AGATHA
CHRISTIE		

of alien races are gathering for a conference. CGI: Bane, Krillitanes, The Doctor and Agatha hunt the murderer! Pure Agatha Christie. Country Gelth, (solus, everything we've got in the computer.¹⁰ PROSTHETICS: Judoon, house, drawing rooms, wood-panelled corridors, below-stairs, etc. Nice and Slitheen, the Graske, the Moxx of Balhoon (well, his brother, the Jixx of smart and gorgeous. It's probably set in 1966, but should feel old-fashioned, Balhoon), Sisters of the Wicker Place Mat, plus a new female alien, a wisetike a '20s/'30s thriller. But the gentry don't date much anyway. And a CGI old counsellor, head of the space conference.¹¹ And Daleks, en masse. Lots monster on the loose. gunfire and exterminations. And the biggest Dalek spaceship interior ever

more like a Dalek Temple. Christ almighty! The skies over the Earth need^{4,8} - CENTURY HOUSE

be changed to weird outer space vistas. Also, visible in the sky, a huge A double-bank episode.⁶ All Doctor. Companion-lite (she sits at home and Dalek ship exterior. The size of a solar system! This will probably explode. Like watches the whole thing on TV with her mum; hopefully, one day's filming with they do. And Davros.¹² her). The Doctor goes live on reality TV show Most Haunted to track down the ghost of the Red Widow. A big, old, abandoned, spooky house, like on a cliff ¹⁰ The Bane first appeared in The Sarah Jane Adventures 1.X; the bat-like Kritlitane in Doctor Who 2.3; the Gelth in Doctor

1.3; the *Isolus* in Doctor Who 2, ¹¹ top. OB vans and trucks with cables ringed around the house. Certain rooms 1

The Slitheen debuted in Doctor Who 1.4; the Graske at Christmas 2005, In

interactive mini-episode Attack of the Graske;

doomed Moxx in Doctor Who 1.2, alongside a clan of background aliens nicknamed the Sisters of the Wicker Place Mat.will flashback to the 1950s or '60s. A big fire sequence towards the end - a 12 The (fictional) creator of the Daleks, mad-scientist Davros. first appeared in 1975 serial Genesis of the Daleks.

couple of rooms burning.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007 00:57:02 GMT

4.9/4.10

-

SPACE

LIBRARY

AN IDEAAAn ancient, alien library on another world has been sealed off for centuries, Penny it is! I like that too.until the Doctor joins an archaeological expedition on a mission to find out Right. The Great Correspondence. Let's

start. I've been sitting here for about twowhy. It's a Steven Moffat script (not available yet), so God help us! He says hours thinking, go on, start writing to Ben. With the back of my head going, EEK!there are moving shadows (I'm worried that this means actual animation), and The scary thing is, it feels so exposed,

balanced by the lovely thing that you're one ofhe describes the library as dark and dusty, abandoned, creepy, though it's alien the few people I'd trust completely to do this

with. The only other person I used toand sci-fi at the same time. Events are connected to an ordinary modern-day show

script-in-progress was my Manchester script editor, Paul Abbott's wife, Saskia,boy in his bedroom.

she lives with a writer.1 She knows how barmy it is.

just going to type and say everything. The moment I start censoring, it'll start to4.11 -
COMPANION

ALONE

'written', and I think you need to know everything. I think that's the processDouble-bank. Doctor-lite. I'll try to keep this low-cost.

Honestly. you're after. I'm going to type what's in my head, and how it started developing today.

not developing, but shifting. It's 4.1, the first episode of Series Four, and the4.12/4.13 - **THE**

STOLEN EARTH

of Penny. A good, iconic episode, but still a standard 45-minute length --The season finale. Earth is transported halfway across the universe as part of

Of course, this big lump of Maybe coexists with thoughts on my two scripts for Thea Dalek plot.⁷ These episodes feature Martha, Captain Jack, Sarah Jane, Elton, *Sarah Jane Adventures - which I'm dying to write, but I suspect time is running out.* and Rose.⁸ Jackie and Mickey?⁹ Also, can I have the rest of the Torchwood

Plus, Torchwood Series Two, for which I'm supposed to be writing the Annual Return team, just for a couple of days? Plus, a futuristic space station complex where Of Suzie, coinciding with the 'death' of lanto, but these plans are being stymied in

preparation stage, because Indira Varma is pregnant and Naoko Mori needs some⁶ Each series has contained at tea stone double-bank episode, featuring nominal appearances from one or more of the regular cast,

so that another episode can be shot simultaneously, to save on filming days.

off.² The schedule is like a spinning wheel of alternative options, intruding into⁷ The Dateks - with their battle cry of 'Ex-ter-min-ate!' - first appeared in Doctor Who irt 19&3 and have featured in many the thinking process. On top of all that there's the Doctor Who Christmas Special, the subsequent episodes, becoming synonymous with the show.

S Captain Jack Harkness (played by John Barrowman) travelled with the Doctor in Series One and Three, and is the central

character tn spin-off show Torchwood', Sarah Jane Smith (Elisabeth Staden), companion to the Third and Fourth Doctors in the

mid 1970s, returned in Doctor Who 2.3, and subsequently spin-off show The Sarah Jane Adventures', Elton Pope (Marc 1 Saskia Abbott script-edited both Bob & Rose and Cosonova.Warren) appeared tn Doctor Who 2.10; f?ose Tyler (Billie Piper) was the Doctor's companion throughout Series One and Two, 2 Torchwood operatives in SeriesOne and Two include computer specialist Toshiko Sato (Naoko Mori), supportman lanto Jones (Garethbefore getting trapped on a parallel Earth with her mother and boyfriend in 2.13. 9 Rose's mother Jackie (played by Camille David-Lloyd), and, in 1.1, second-in-command Suzie Costello (Indira Varma).Coduri) and boyfriend Mickey (Noel Clarke) featured in Series One and Two.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE			

Titanic In Space. (Titanic II- is that a good title?) For the past few days, I keep focusing big Casting Maybe all the time. He's already thinking. Sheridan Smith? Someone like one of the central characters, an old historian-type figure - a nice, funny part, a younger Sarah Parish? That ability to really banter with the Doctor, to match him. man who's studied the Earth (these are aliens, sailing above the Earth, on a Christmas And to love him, actually. Under all this is my need to write The Doctor In LoveCruise), and he gets all Earth history hopelessly wrong. "They worship the Great God again. I think we've handled it exactly right for Series Three: he'd never fall in love with Santa! He should wear round pebble glasses. A while back, I read that Doctor Who is Martha, because he can't just love the next woman to walk through the door, after one of the few programmes that David Jason lets his young daughter watch. Perfect Rose. That would cheapen the whole thing. Martha's unrequited love for the Doctor is guest star! Yesterday, we asked Andy Pryor, our casting director, to contact David's beautiful. She deserves to grow out of that, so leaves, giving us a nice year-long bridge agent. The agent confirmed that, yes, David's daughter genuinely loves the show, so Penny is walking into the Doctor's life at just the right time. (It fills me with horror, they'll talk to him, with the caveat that he's very busy, and with our fear that he'd cost actor's lives and wages and destinies being decided on my whims, sitting here, looking a fortune. But that created today's shift onto Doctor Who 4.1, because Sarah Jane and for the right story. The Maybe isn't just ethereal; it actually employs people. Still, the *Torchwood problems can park. And David Jason - well, we'd have to meet him and* show is the most important thing.) The first time that the Doctor sees Penny, it should schmooze him, if it ever happens, so I leave that for a minute... and my mind skips be like -- wham! Both hearts. onto 4.1, because that's sort of 'clean', untouched, and untroubled - Northern also gives Penny a northern mother. Lovely! Maybe a bit posh. Maybe

Well, no, the real truth is, I'm sitting here listening to Mika's album, Life in Cartoon lottery-winner posh. I miss the funny mum. Little voice in the Maybe, a little doubt

Motion. I like Mika. Oh, a lot. Just listen to Any Other World', Track 6 of his album. whispering away: 'You've done funny mum. Lots of funny mums, in fact. Rose's. Even

I heard that today for the first time. Click! That's what shifted me onto 4.1. A piece of Donna's. What about a funny dad?' But dads aren't funny. Yes, that's not fair, and

music.' In any other world/ You could tell the difference.' That's a Doctor Who companion probably not true. But tough. We're actually close to tackling that question that I always

song! That's 'I'm going in the TARDIS!' And then those violins start. 'Say goodbye to refuse to answer: where do you get your ideas from? That's why this

correspondence

the world you thought you lived in.' That's Penny! I'm going to use that track on screen, fascinates me. Every writer says that they can't answer that question, but the ideas do

as she decides to become the companion. The scene is written in my head. I can see come from somewhere. That conversation about funny mums happened in the foyer of

it - where she is, how she walks, how I write the stage directions, the mood of it, the Claridge's. That's when I thought, let's give Penny a funny mum. ('Where do you get

romance of it, the size of it. I can absolutely see it. Moments of clarity like that, when your ideas from?' 'Claridge's!') Or what about a grandfather? Nice old bloke, gentle,

everything else is in flux, you cling to. You might remind me about that song one day sweet, telescope in his shed - he's always been the stargazer. He's the one who waves

and I'll just be like, 'Oh yeah, forgot.' Or more importantly -- 'It didn't work.' But Penny off, tears in his eyes. It's all unashamed sentiment in the Maybe. I'd planned that

that's today's thought. Never mind schedules, and actors, and bollocks -- I've found a grandad for Martha, vaguely, but he never appeared. He lingers on. They do that, the

companion's soundtrack! And I'm excited about Penny. Characters In Search Of An Author.

Thoughts I've had about Penny, prior to this: a bit older, maybe 30+ (are we losing Other thoughts: the story has to be set on Earth. I've always had this vague image

all the little girls in the audience?), smarter, sassier. All of us loved Catherine Tate and of a housing estate - not a council estate, I mean suburbia - and a great big inverted

that sort of repartee with the Doctor.³ At the Radio Times Covers Party, Jane Tranter bowl of a spaceship lands on top of it. Huge ship, covering and sealing off the estate.

(the BBC's Controller of Fiction) said to me, 'Can't we bring back Donna for a few The space inside becomes night, whilst outside it's day. The ordinary turned into the

episodes?' Hmm, no. There are tentative Maybe plans for everyone to come back in extraordinary. That's very Doctor Who. Turning suburbia into terror. The police and

cameos for 4.12/4.13, including Donna, so let's keep our powder dry for that. But we army surround the bowl, but they can't get in, while on the inside -- a hunt! An alien

all liked Donna's equal-status sparkiness, independence, sharpness -
hunt. A creature is released - on purpose? Or is it a prison ship? Has
the creature

Hang on. Back to Penny. What's her job?! Journalist? It worked for Sarah Jane.
In run amok and killed the crew, and it's crash-landed here? Nasty alien, vicious,
give

4.4/4.5, there's going to be an Earth research base that needs investigating.
Maybe. Penny something to really fight. Fast and deadly. Probably CGI. Make it able
to climb

Also, Penny is northern. It's my love of northern, and my ability to write that
speech on ceilings - that's always scary. Scuttling. Words like scuttling become good and
pattern. I actually miss it. But we've told Andy Pryor, 'Don't limit your thinking
to important. I like that.

northern.' That would be stupid. We've just got to get the best. Andy lives in his
great And in the middle of this estate, there's the Doctor. Taken as read.

That
was the thinking... up until today. Thank you, Mika. Today it became:

3 Catherine Tate played would-be-companion Donna Noble in
3.X. simplify. What if a spaceship crashed, and an alien is on
the loose at night? No bowl.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE

A simple, sudden thought of, no, don't contain it; you can make this story wide and that ridiculous run of female Doctor Who companions with boys' or boyish names --free. That made me start to write to you, because the process is starting. The process of Benny, Roz, Charley, even Ace. But that's all hindsight. I just thought, she's called Rose.going through options. The start of thinking about 4.1. And the stray thought, should Instantly, it felt right. On ITV drama The Grand, the executive producer made mePenny start this episode to camera, like a video diary? That's hard to sustain, but it's change the lead woman's name, on a whim, from Judith to Sarah -- and that characterreaching for a different feel, using the stuff of every other drama. Not being limited never felt right from that moment on. I never wrote her well enough. Honestly, Ito a straightforward telling of a sci-fi or fantasy story. The point is - I don't think that believe that.will happen, but I did have an exhilarating moment of thinking it could happen. That Penny's mum is called Moira. There, I just thought of it now! Perfect name.exhilaration carries over into the rest of the story, and creates these e-mails. Look, I'm wary of anyone who's about to start writing ever reading something like

this
 and thinking, that's the way to do it, that's what /must do. If you're going to writeFROM:
 BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY
 2007 17:30:09 GMT a script yourself, Ben, please don't think that you have
 to copy me. I don't think ARE: AN
 IDEA creative
 process copies too much anyway. I think it finds its own way. Equally, I know»Titanic II- is
 that a good title?« the world is
 swamped with Robert McKee-type books on structure, and there might

Do you really want me to answer that, Russell?
 Really?! be, for all I know, a How to Choose Your
 Characters' Names self-help book. It probably

I've just downloaded Mika's album. And I Googled him to see what he looks like. exists. In America. You're just as free to sit down with a Bumper Book of Baby NamesI found him in the end, on his official website, sat atop a piano, without shoes. He and choose one with a pin. Whatever works for you.has oddly shaped toes. The impact of music on your writing, one art form inspiring Now, music is very important to me. I always try to find an album that fits eachanother (there's a thought - do you see what you do as an art or a craft?), is interesting. thing that I write, and then I play it whenever I'm writing, repeating and repeatingTell me if 'O Mio Babbino Caro' or the Prodigy's 'Smack My Bitch Up' influences until I've stopped hearing it, really. It just sinks in, becomes part of the script. There'stoday's work. not always much variance with Doctor Who, because most episodes are some sort of

Also, I'd like to know more about how you name characters. How much importance action adventure, so often movie scores will do. They equal the size and energy that wedo you attach to finding the right name? Would Rose have smelt as sweet by any other try to show on screen. It's much harder with dramas that are more individual piecesname? (Do you see what I did there? Eh? Eh?) Would we view her differently were she of work. (Not that Doctor Who isn't personal to me, but there is an essential Doctorcalled Natalie? Or Rachael? Or Martha even? Are unusual names better? Can you start *Whoness that isn't all my own creation.*) *Queer as Folk was Hi-NRG albums, to catch*writing a character without a name in place? that sheer clubland drive and instil it into the drama. Those characters lived by that

One other thought, for now. You said, 'Words like scuttling become good and important,' beat. Bob & Rose was written to Play, the classic Moby album. I must have played itbut also you've had 'this vague image of a housing estate... and a great big inverted bowl of tens of thousands of times. That album is urban, sexy, full of lonely hearts at night, justa spaceship lands on top of it.' So, do you prefer writing in words or pictures? as Bob & Rose was full of taxicabs and chance meetings. And The Second Coming was

Radiohead

-- experimental, anguish, dark, pain. That was fun!FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2007 22:17:12 GMT

»Do

you prefer writing in words or pictures?«RE: AN IDEA

Yes,

very pictorial. A visual imagination isn't true of a lot of -- very successful -I won't be working tonight, because I've had a drink. Never work with drink. (That's writers, but I can draw, I was drawing before I was writing, so pictures are wired in.me, not a rule. Paul Abbott does the opposite.) I've been for dinner with David and It's easy to say that applied to Doctor Who, because it's such a visual show, but it'sPhil.4 We had such a good time, with some genuine Doctor Who discussion. But that's true of everything I've written. Bob & Rose, Episode 1, the first ad break, beautifullythe first drink I've had in ages, so cor blimey! I'm not what I was. shot, a crane lifting up as Bob and Rose's respective taxis go their separate ways. That

Names. As I think of a character, I think of the name. I never spend time debating was key. That image was in my head before anything was written. To get pretentious,though I can pin all sorts to them in retrospect. Rose Tyler? I'd used Rose in Bob (why am I calling it pretentious, to describe something creative? Shame on me!), that& Rose, so that name is like a good luck charm. There's the desire to make the series moment sums up the whole show; not the sexuality shtick, but the randomness ofessentially British, and that's the most British name in the world. I was annoyed with it, that two-in-the-morning emptiness, out of which two people make a connection.

Of

course, sometimes the pictures don't come. It's easy, quoting that scene. There are

plenty
of ordinary scenes that aren't so memorable. Also, it's not just music + picture4 David
Tennant (who plays the Doctor) and Phil Collinson (producer).

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WRITER'S

Maybe has a thousand other voices saying, 'Must lose weight. Must stop smoking. alcoholism or whatever, I actually think, blimey, I'm so vanilla. But I'm just barmy in

Must phone my sisters more often.' Etc. Etc. Etc. Those voices aren't separate from different ways, I suppose.

whichever Doctor Who plot I'm considering; they're part of it. And look - that list is I had a hell of a time from my mid 20s to mid 30s. Well, everyone does. But I was

full of doubts. That's the thing about writing. It's all doubt. Doubts about plot, story, compulsive and obsessive, and that can get dangerous. I was out every night - really,

character, etc, let in every other doubt, the real doubts, about yourself, your very self. every night, even Sundays -- dancing, drinking, and off my head on God-knows-what.

I'm also sort of... hmm, pausing, wondering how to say this, but I'll say it anyway, I'd be out till five in the morning, get into work at Granada at nine, throw up in the

it's ground work, and I think you have to know everything to get to the heart of the toilets, then go and be brilliant at my job. What a time! It was madness. (I'll draw a veil

creative stuff... I'm sort of obsessive. About work, obviously. And smoking. And just over a lot of it or this'll never be printed.) Then I had one calamitous night in 1997,

look at this e-mail! Proof! A quick chat has turned into an essay. And I get like that three days after the death of Princess Diana. I actually, really, remember thinking,

about people. I'm not good at handling people. I'm very good at appearing to be Friend Jesus, if I die, I won't even make a minor headline, it's all Diana! But that cleaned me

To All, but that's easy. But I rarely tell anyone, anywhere, what I'm really thinking, up completely. No therapy, no nothing. Just stopped. Well, no, not straight away, it

ever. I love my own company. I choose my own company. Because of that obsessive took me three more years, but I got there in the end. I hardly even drink any more.

streak. Right now, I think I'm obsessing on these e-mails, and on you. Whether you God, I miss it. Really. Compulsive obsessive.

like it or not. Still, it'll give us material. I wrote Queer as Folk as a hymn and testament to those days. Not a condemnation of

Writing isn't just a job that stops at six-thirty. (Well, bad writers can do that.) It's them, but a salute. I'm proud of that. And only I really know that. Well, and you now.

a mad, sexy, sad, scary, obsessive, ruthless, joyful, and utterly, utterly personal thing. But that drive and compulsion, and even the self-destruction, is still there - all

poured

There's not the writer and then me; there's just me. All of my life connects to the writing. into the writing now, though still lurking.

All

of

It.

Back to

the plot! Last night, as I lay in bed, I found myself thinking, Penny should

That's scared you off, hasn't it? And all we got out of that was bloody Moira! Pages of be jilted. In Scene 1. Leaving her raw and open, just ready for a dazzling Time Lord to

cheap psychoanalysis, and we end up with a mother's name! That is, equally, why I love enter her life. Imagine: a house, full of party guests; Penny is running around saying,

this whole bloody thing. Oh, don't think I'm mad and creepy. I'm wondering whether 'Ssh, he's coming, hush everyone, lights off!' They all stand in the dark, her boyfriend

to send, or delete some stuff. Ah, send. - Gary, he's called Gary - walks in, lights on, surprise! He's standing there, blinking,

shocked...

as behind him, his other girlfriend - Roxanne - walks into the house, which

5 Julie Gardner, Doctor Who's executive producer. they'd thought would be empty! Nice, cute, needs work.

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DOCTOR TALE ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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Practical considerations (because this is where you have to be tough with a scene, and And just when I want to be thinking about Doctor Who 4.1. It's hard to turn off onedit it before it's even written): for this scene to work, the lights have to be off, because story while another is just starting. But it must be done.Gary needs to think that Penny is away, assuming that they live together. Problem: There's a funny thing happening, too. This is what's really going on in my head.you'd have to switch the lights off as he drove into the street, not as he approached the Yesterday, Julie, Phil and I get into the lift. We all turn to the mirror, fuss with ourfront door, or he'd know. So that means - what? - a minute, two minutes, in darkness, hair, we all sigh, and then hoot with laughter at ourselves. But then Phil says, 'I've gotuntil he actually opens the door. That's a dead two minutes, right at the top of the something terrible to tell you. Have you watched the very first Doctor Who Confidentialepisode. You can fill that dead time with Penny helping the set-up, whispering to her recently? From 2005?' No. Oh God. 'You should see us,' he continues, 'all three of usmate, 'He thinks I'm in Southport for the weekend,' but there's only so much of Penny - we look like children' Ohhhh God! 'We look so young and happy.' And then hesaying 'Ssh' that you can take. Practical considerations are important when writing for looks at me and says, 'Russell, you're sitting in that old flat, and your hair looks good,the screen - even simple things, like the time it takes for a person to walk from A to and you look beautiful.' Ohhhh. And we're falling apart with laughter, clutching eachB. Lots of scripts say: 'Gary gets into the car and drives off.' But think about how long other in the corridor, but that loud crack you can hear is my vain old heart. I'm tellingthat takes. You open the door, get in, adjust the gears and put the key in, do up your you this because that has been at the front of my head ever since. Right at the front.seatbelt, ignition, rev up, drive off- that's 30 seconds. The writer intended five seconds Blocking anything else. That's what I mean about work and life being indivisible.maximum, but it can't be done, not without a lot of camera set-ups. You can tighten Never mind 2.1, 4.1, Christmas 2007... my head is full of that first Confidentialthe length of the process in the Edit by cutting to close-up (CU) keys, CU seatbelt documentary, wondering how knackered I am by all this work, all this sitting. Oh,going click, CU exhaust gunning fumes - but that's three extra shots already on what's I could cry. My sister says I lead an incredibly straightforward life. No car to worry meant to be a simple, one-line event. A lot of time is wasted on a thousand sets while about, mortgage paid off, certainly no money worries. But then a simple thing likedirectors and actors try to fix those sorts of problems. 'You look beautiful' ruins days of thinking.

But the most important worry is this: Penny lives in a house. With a boyfriend. That's not entirely true. It works the other way sometimes. When my mum was

Settled. I don't like that. It feels too old, too remote from those eight-year-old girls dying, I was rewriting The Second Coming, and work was a good escape. It was nice to

watching. Does the scene work in a flat? A flat is more like an eight-year-old's bedroom. retreat into my head.

Is the scene just too cute? But it's handy for pushing Penny to where I want her to be, But I sat in the car back to Manchester yesterday, trying to make myself think about

emotionally. Alone. Brittle. Sad, but wistful. The result of that scene is a good image: *Torchwood 2.1. Except that doesn't work, it never works, you can't force it. I mustn't*

night, city street, lamplight, taxis. Penny is walking along, heartbroken, being funny buy into that myth of delicate creativity, but that's what's happening. My mind just

about it on her mobile to her friend, saying why-oh-why can't she meet the right wriggles off somewhere else. It feels like flinching, to consider Torchwood. I cringe. And

man... as she walks past a police box. I know already that's a bad start. I'm not sure a truly good piece of writing ever comes from that sort of beginning. Poor Torchwood.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2007 11:47:11 GMT

RE: AN IDEA FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2007 17:13:09 GMT

I'm home. Manchester. But this is odd: I get welded to a place when I write, because RE: AN IDEA

it now feels weird not to be writing to you in my Cardiff flat. Manchester feels wrong, A question (a bit random, but bear with me): have you been watching Skins! It's E4's

feels like starting from scratch somehow. I try to never carry a script from one city new 'teen drama'. I saw the trailers on TV last month - full of wild, feral, hormonal,

to another, because they feel very specific to either room. (But I left Mika in Cardiff. house-ravaging revelry - and thought, blimey, this looks incredible! But it's not. Not

Damn! I'll have to download that later. I'm making do with Rufus Wainwright.) yet. A few moments of genius aside, Skins is a bit of a misfire. It has so much potential,

I'd better update you on what's in my head. I feel daft calling it the Maybe right

now, and there are glimpses of genius, but there's a real gulf between the show that everyone

because it's all pretty empty. The other day, Julie put her foot down, brilliantly, and I involved seems to think that they're making and the show that they're actually making.

am now writing Torchwood 2.1! But I've got no ideas. No bloody story. And it has to It's fascinating. It deserves to be better. And yet I watch it, week in, week out, hoping

be in by the end of March. It's like looking into your head, into the store of ideas, and that it'll improve. I'm an optimist. Or an idiot.

there's nothing there. I've a pre-titles sequence - a blowfish driving a sports car - but that's a one-off sequence to reintroduce the show. After the titles... nothing. Nothing'

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ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBEDOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SATURDAY 24
FEBRUARY 2007 18:08:19 GMT

you
up. Even Donna had to mellow over the course of The Runaway Bride. For Penny,
being
jilted is instantly, automatically likeable, but we're talking about scenes of only aRE: AN
IDEA
few
minutes in duration, because really she's there to be chased by monsters. The jiltingI'm
watching Skins. You do get glimmers of it working. Sid and Cassie are interesting
is
shorthand. If she were awful, if she'd just jilted someone and was laughing about itcharacters
(is that her name, the anorexic girl?), and sometimes Nicholas Hoult takes (well,
she's already a bit unbelievable, in this crude example), then she'd be much morehis clothes
off, so come on! Be fair! What a mouth on that boy. But I do know
what complicated, and you'd spend a lot more time trying to get to know her and
engageyou
mean.
her, but that isn't actually the point of 4.1. There are stronger voices saying, 'Get

on
with it! Where are the monsters?'FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T
DAVIES, SATURDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2007 20:54:21 GMT

In
other TV dramas... well, first off, most people are likeable, or go through theRE: AN
IDEA
world with
some construct of character that they hope is likeable. That's how you getNicholas Hoult the
actor is appealing in other stuff, but his Skins character, Tony, is through life. Even if
you're an SS guard, you want to get on with other SS guards.so unlikeable. So improbably
unlikeable. Can that be sustained? Or is Tony heading The key with characters is
to be honest. If a character's actions are believable, then thatfor redemption? To what extent
do lead characters have to be likeable, do you think? character will work. Notions
of like or not-like become irrelevant. One of the finestEspecially in serial drama, where you're
asking an audience to stick with them week ever examples of unlikeable
characters is the movie Dangerous Liaisons. That's the storyafter week? The Doctor is a
likeable character. A modern-day hero. And Rose Tyler -- of two absolute monsters
at war -- vile, vicious people -- and yet you love them, andwe like her a lot. Mickey and
Donna weren't so likeable to begin with, but we warmed to weep for them both at the
end. Brilliant writing. Those characters are so absolutelythem as they proved their worth.
There can't have been many viewers, by the end of The true to themselves, you end
up admiring and understanding monsters.*Runaway Bride, who weren't rooting for
Donna to accept the Doctor's invitation to* Stuart Jones in Queer as

Folk is like that. Without him, that show would have been travel on in the TARDIS. I'm with Jane Tranter on this one. Even the opening of 4.1, The Everyday Lives Of Gays, and the whole thing would have died. But Stuart is still waiting for a ticket out of Maybe, you've planned so that Penny's likeability is, selfish, cruel, cold, hedonistic... and fantastic! He's the star around which every other deliberately, right there on screen from the off: she's on the phone to her mate, she's been character satellites. Stuart is honest and straightforward, and knows himself very well, jilted (we like her because she's been jilted -- we've all been jilted), and you say she's and knows what he wants. Oh, people hated him, vociferously at first, but he's attractive 'being funny about it'. We like her for being funny about it. How important is it that as a character, undeniably, because he's true. How many Stuarts are there on Canal we like Penny and Donna and the Doctor, and how significant is it that I don't like Street? Dozens. Hundreds! More importantly, any one of us can, on a certain night of Tony from Skins'? our lives, be like that, exactly like him. There are times when we would all do anything

drop our friends, stampede over people, defy convention -- for the sake of getting a

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 24
FEBRUARY 2007 21:42:09 GMT man. Or a woman. I don't simply mean that men like Stuart exist; I mean that we can

RE:

AN

IDEA

all be like

that sometimes. Every one of us. My job as writer is not to worry on behalf

Likeability. I've been thinking about your question during Dancing on Ice (did I ever of an invisible consensus wondering about sheer bloody boring niceness. Allow the

tell you, I was asked to be on that? Actually skating! Julie is still laughing, to this day) bastards to be lovely, allow the heroes to be weak, and then they'll come alive.

- and I wonder, should a writer worry about likeability? It tends to be the concern of I know that you can't stand Tony from Skins, but I can see, or think I can see, what

people outside the script, the producers and commissioners. Years ago, I invented a they're trying to do with him. He's got that Stuart Jones certainty, complacency, charm

soap called Revelations. At the story conference, one of the commissioners from Carlton and good looks, and cuts through everyday events with an absolute ruthlessness -- and

said, 'None of these characters seems very likeable,' and Peter Whalley, a wise old soap I think we're meant to admire that, to love the monster. The problem, I think, is that

writer, just sat in the corner of the room, puffed on his pipe, and said, 'Likeability is I do not believe a 17-year-old boy like that exists anywhere in the world. That's my

very low on the list of useable adjectives.' Bless him. problem with Tony. I think that's yours, too. He's a collection of ideas, an ideal, a

However, Doctor Who is designed to incorporate likeable characters, because so walking wish list, but trapped in the wrong age. If he were 20, 21, then maybe he'd

much else is going on. You're creating monsters, plots, worlds, environments, so even seem more real -- but even that's doubtful. In Queer as Folk, which was designed to be

fairly complicated characters like Rose are sketches, in a sense, to be filled in by good YOUNG! YOUNG! YOUNG! in its outlook, I had to make both Stuart and Vince

acting. A likeable character is shorthand, to get you into the story, fast. An unlikeable 29 to make them believable. Tony doesn't stand a chance. He's simply too young to

companion, for example, is going to rail against the conventions of the show, so holds

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE

be that
assured. knows-
where... ha ha, pathetic... but then I can lock it away again.

Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I'm out of touch. Maybe boys like that do exist. Or maybe I thought I'd tell you this because, well, that's the contract, and the things that are boys like that can be invented. It's got to be said, Ben, that Skins is popular with Da past are never really past; they're still going on in my head, all the time. But they're

under
control now. A lot of nights writing are spent not just thinking of plot, character, Kidz. Maybe we're just too old for it. Yes, even you! I just accused you of being old. I'm

pace,
etc, but also waiting till 2am or so, just waiting, sitting there with the script open very happy now. I shall ice-skate away with a triple loop.

but
not actually working on it, finding anything else to do, sending trivial e-mails, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2007 01:51:01 GMT

eating,
watching a bit of telly, whatever, by which time that snaky, tempting voice has

given
up - and then I can get back to work. It stops by 2am because that's when clubs RE:
AN IDEA

used
to shut, as simple and as literal as that. I know clubs are open all hours now, I just saw a trailer for next week's Skins, in which it seems that Tony is kissing the blond

and
I thank God it wasn't like that when I was younger or the pattern would be a gay boy, Maxxie. This is good drama, Ben! Stop fighting it! Skins wins.

I'm off to Brighton in the morning, Monday to Thursday, selling shows to Johnny thousand times worse. Foreigner (it's the BBC Showcase, where Worldwide - the commercial arm of the BBC Blimey, this is therapy. And so is writing - flogs all its shows across the world), so that'll be interesting, to have a break, to see

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2007 08:31:34 GMT what I'm thinking by the time that's done, because my thoughts

this weekend have

been dominated by Torchwood 2.1. It's cancelling out everything else. The sheer white
RE: AN IDEASpace of it. My mind is blank. It's more like fear and panic. It's so bad that I'm inclined I just read last night's e-mail. How self-pitying! I suppose everyone sounds like that atto tell everyone this and pull out of the script. But I won't. I always think like this late 2am. I mean, it's all true, but putting that stuff into words sounds sort of fraudulent.at night. In the day, when Julie is looking at me, like I'm the one who can save them, Or embarrassing. I suppose I want you to think I'm marvellous, but I sound like anthen - I don't know - I'm too polite. That's ridiculous, isn't it? But I'm the man who idiot. Hey ho. Still, glad I said it all. Just about.fixes things. They don't need to hear my problems, just that I can fix theirs. That's more Anyway, daylight, Brighton, ta-ra!than a production problem. That's me. I don't tell people what I'm really thinking. P.S. This morning, I thought: Penny Carter. Sounds nice.Maybe things would be better if I did. People would help. But I just don't.

This is a rare problem. It's come along just as we happen to have started this process. **FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2007 09:48:16 GMT**

It's not typical. But since I've already told you a lot of the things that I don't tell **BRIGHTON**

anyone, like the stuff that I got up to years ago (and I've skipped over some of it, and All writers are self-pitying. Discuss. (No, don't.) Thank you, again, for your openness.

deleted stuff, cos, y'know, dignity and all that), you might as well know this... If tomorrow morning's headline is 'Family TV Writer Found in Brighton Gutter', I

In a crisis, another sly snake of a voice starts wheedling away. 'Go out and get off won't half feel guilty. I wonder, though, have you ever pursued 'suffering' in the hope

your head, then you'll think of a good idea,' it says. I used to do that, go out drinking of achieving some sort of, I don't know, creative epiphany? You say that Queer as Folk

in a crisis. I used to believe it worked. Actually, I can pinpoint certain evenings when was inspired by your own experiences, but has it ever worked the other way round?

it did work. I can point to exactly where I was standing in Manchester's Cruz 101 Have you ever gone looking for trouble along with inspiration?

(downstairs, by the funny little stone well), off my head, when I thought of the frankly

brilliant climax to Series One of The Grand. The thought was blinding. (It was

simply FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2007 15:32:23 GMT

this: both brothers are called Mr Bannerman! They've got the same name! You'd have **RE: BRIGHTON**

to see the episode to make sense of that, but it was so clever.) It wasn't the alcohol or I'm typing from Hull, from a cheap hotel where they've a computer in the bar. It costs

whatever I was on that night that made me think of that idea - I've created enough a quid for 20 minutes. I was only in Brighton for one night, then my boyfriend's

stuff since to know that I can do it on my own - but nonetheless the connection is mother died. The poor soul. Oh, it's sad. I've been around to the house and all that,

there. Literally, a temptation. 'Just spend one night in Brighton, on your own, out in but they're all together now, brothers and sister, so I've retreated. Escaping back into

a club, not talking to anyone, just losing it, and see what you think up.' Bad voice. work again.

But it's always there. And I'm not 100 per cent clean. I don't want to sound like a saint »have you ever pursued 'suffering' in the hope of achieving some sort of, I don't

here. Once a year or so, I still go out, on my own, I do get slaughtered, I end up God- know, creative epiphany?«

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ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBEDOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

No. Honestly, that simple. Never. There's an underlying question of why -- why did I

end up so drunk and off my face on whatever all those years ago? -- but honestly, during

those dark times, not one part of my brain was thinking, I'm doing this for research.

It's way too scary, too exciting, too mad, too needy for anything that ordered and logical. If only I could use that excuse! Nowadays, it's like I almost entirely disassociate

that person from myself. Maybe it's best left sleeping. Just promise me, if it's midnight

and I say, 'Sod it, I'm off to buy some Chinese red' or something, you'll say, 'STOP!!!'

Mind you, it's been so long, they probably don't call it Chinese red any more. I'd come

back with a takeaway sweet-and-sour.

Is that true, though? Did I just lie my way out of that? Okay, so I've never sought out

an experience just so that I can use it in a script, but every experience, every single one,

I'm thinking, this is interesting. And they do find their way into a script in the end. So

which comes first? Blimey, that'll keep me awake.

Meanwhile, I had to take emergency measures. Given the time that I'll have to

spend with my boyfriend, I took action on Torchwood 2.1-- and stole a plot! Lovely Joe

Lidster (nice man, so enthusiastic) is being tried out as a writer on Torchwood, so about

a month ago I gave him one of my standby plots: Spooky 24-Hour Supermarket. (Have

you ever been in one at 3am? Weirdest places in the world -- so bright and empty, and

staffed by The Damned.) And Joe has been working on this script faithfully, though he

has some way to go till it's TV-ready, but then I got on the train to Hull, and thought,

clear as daylight -- that's my plot, I need it, I'm having it. Made the calls. Done.
Poor

Joe ousted (we'll find him something else), but I've got a story. Smash and grab.
Never

done that before. Mind you, it's not a brilliant plot -- it's more of a standard mid-series

plot -- and now I have to make it brilliant, with precious little time.

Also, on the train down to London on Monday, I was thinking about this year's

Doctor-lite double-banker episode. I got an image: Penny and Moira driving
into that

estate in 4.1... what if, in Sliding Doors fashion, they'd turned left that day, but
this

time we have them turning right? What if she'd never met the Doctor, and
4.11 tells

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 3 MARCH 2007
16:24:50 GMT

the story of that? Good idea! There we go. My quid's almost up. Love from
Hull.

RE:

BRIGHTON

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 28
FEBRUARY 2007 23:47:13 GMT

Do

I worry about finding original ideas? Not at all. Within limits. For a start, there are
no

new

stories, and long-running shows eat up a lot of plots. These plots haven't
necessarily

RE: BRIGHTON

been

seen on primetime BBC One. Material doesn't have to be new, just good. You

Greatest sympathies to your fella on the passing of his mum. That's horrible
news.

might

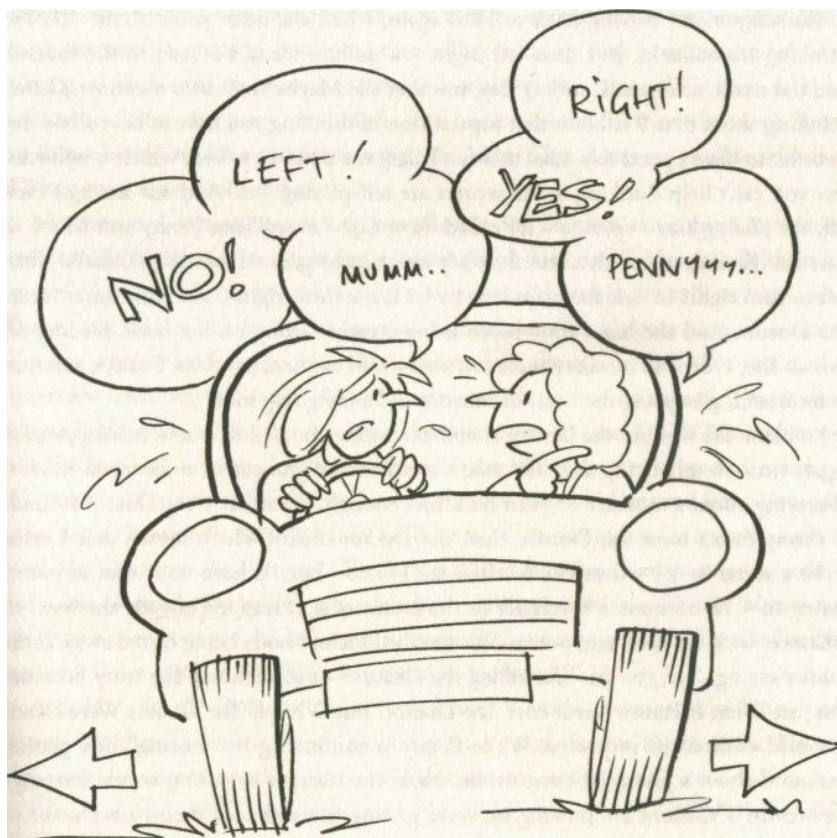
as well ditch all alternative-timeline stories because A Christmas Carol did it first.

Penny and Moira, Sliding Doors style? I think it was Robert Holmes who once
said:

Oust

how brilliant was Dickens in coming up with that? It's now replacing the Nativity

'We only ever use original ideas on Doctor Who, but not necessarily our own original



as the Christmas story. What a man!) I'd feel revolted if the start of the process was, T

ideas.' Clever man. With the sheer wealth of sci-fi material coming out of the US over

like Sliding Doors, so let's do that.' But I went through a genuine sequence of thoughts

the past 20 years, isn't it near impossible not to touch on story ideas that have been

that led me to a Sliding Doors-type of story - the need for a double-banker, Doctor-lite

done already? Isn't this equally true for any writer, of any genre, in any medium? How

episode,

etc - so I feel completely justified. I feel, and the story feels, fundamentally
much do you worry about that?

honest.

(If I can learn from Sliding Doors' precedents, though, all well and good.)

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ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBEDOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

The traffic to the right screeches to a halt, original Penny and original Moira

Thursday night, driving back to Hull again, I had a sudden panic about 4.1. I'm

see what's happened, just some cars tailing back, so they have to turn left. And thinking it's bollocks. But then last night -- a million ideas! I'd been to the funeral,

goes back into its groove. [Major editorial worry -- and this is rare, so it has and the result, after a sad, stifling day, was that the Maybe went into overtime. (Later,

brackets -- the story requires the lead audience-identification character, Penny, thinking about that, I fell into that superstition of thinking you have to have a bad day

throw herself under a car! Don't copy that, kids. Yikes, I can see trouble with that. In order to have a good day. Like there's a balance, a pattern, a God, which is bollocks,

just have to write it carefully] but you can't help thinking it. All writers are self-pitying, yes. And self-hating.) First

I was stuck on 4.6, pencilled in for Stephen Greenhorn to write. Ioff, the Sliding Doors episode -- it's called Turn Left -- is brilliant. Penny and Moira in

really like that man. I was due a meeting with him next Friday to talk ideas, but that car. Fateful, casual decision: how's it quickest to get to Donna's grandad's? Turn

it yesterday because my head was empty. I'd nothing to talk to him about. Left or turn right? In 4.1, she turns left. In 4.11, she turns right - so Penny never meets

of me thinks, he's lovely, he loves us, just ask him for his own ideas. But maybe the Doctor. And she has a time-psych-thing-creature living on her back, feeding off

too power-mad for that. Ha! This is interesting, though, because I've just read an alt-life. Ooh, but certain people can see it - old women, psychics, Penny's nervous,

with him in Doctor Who Magazine, which got me thinking.⁷ I learnt more quiet friend, glimpsing the beast in mirrors. Is Penny going mad?

Stephen from that interview than I ever have face-to-face. In DWM, Stephen says

Problem: life without the Doctor is dull. Nice idea, the alt-life, but what's happening!

it's unusual, writing Doctor Who, because the lead character never really changes,

Apart from simply living that life? And the occasional glimpse-of-monster-in-mirror?

he would in any other drama; he just changes the world around him. Very true.

Worrying about a monster on your back isn't enough. But what if the Doctor is dead?

yet... therefore... wouldn't it be brilliant to ask Stephen to write a story in which,

If Penny didn't meet the Doctor, then the Doctor died. (Which means that I must

the Doctor really changes? (The text of DWM feeds back into the series itself- I

write a scene in 4.1 where Penny saves the Doctor. But I'd have done that anyway.)

this process!) We haven't got a Madame de Pompadour or Human Nature-type

Penny in 4.11 becomes a bystander to the events of 4.1, trapped outside the bowl
or story in Series Four yet, so let's have something
that really stretches David's limitless

whatever with the army and police. She sees the Doctor's body being carted away,
some acting.⁸ What can that be? Well, let's really go
for broke...

soldier saying, 'He gave his life, killing the creature' or something. The story becomes

child. Give the Doctor a child! A daughter. Pre-titles sequence: the Doctor and

not just What If Penny Never Met The Doctor? but What If The Doctor Were
Dead? Penny are trapped underground. Door
explodes open. Smoke clears. Great big sexy

A world without its protector. While Penny is continuing her 'normal' life,
getting Amazon of a woman standing there, loaded
with guns, and says... 'Hello, dad!'

paranoid about a glimpsed beast on her back, the weather is getting warmer,
strange It's a war-torn world, an Earth colony in
mid-invasion, she's leader of the rebels,

reports on TV, aliens are moving in; we're getting invaded, and there's no Doctor
to she and the Doctor have to get to know each other,
and lose each other, in the middle

save us. With Earth falling, Penny needs to travel back in time to stop her original
self of gunfire and barricades and running. But how is she
his daughter?! Even I don't

from turning
right.

an ex-girlfriend/mother in the background. Ah, but it's sci-fi: she's a genetic

But how does Penny travel in time? The thing on her back? No! The TARDIS!

Of scraping extrapolated into a fully grown woman. Somehow. Technically, his daughter.

course! The Doctor is dead, but he left the TARDIS behind, so UNIT has gutted it.
6 Ooh, technically a Time Lord. (She's got to die at the end, of course.) Or what if

A big empty warehouse, pool of lights at the centre, the police box, innards gutted,
some remote probe scans the Doctor and Penny the moment they step out of the

scientists all around. They can't really use the TARDIS, because it's beyond them, but
TARDIS, and then they meet this fully grown warrior woman who's their daughter?

they can make one person travel back in time - and they've worked out that Penny is
From a simple scan, the enemy, the aliens, create fully grown clone soldiers who are

at the heart of the nexus. Penny has to travel back to that road, on that day, to stop
your children. A form of psychological warfare -- you'd find it harder to gun down your

herself. But it needs a chase, so Penny is on foot. Running. I love running. Especially
own child. Hmm, bit odd. Bit short story. Bit mad. Bit cluttered, if it's Penny's child

if the lead character is running. The cannibalised TARDIS equipment is faulty, she
too. Do you see, in reaching to make something new, you can make it over-complex?

arrives back in time, but half a mile away, it's too late, the car is pulling out, so to
At heart, Doctor Who is a Saturday night, primetime show. But, but, but... there might

stop the original car turning right... she runs in front of the traffic. She kills herself.
be something in there.

Alt-Penny has to die. In dying, she fades away, with a blissful smile, because she never

Doctor Who Magazine (DWM), first published as Doctor Who Weekly in 1979, is an official, four-weekly periodical about the

6 UNIT (standing for Unified Intelligence Taskforce, formerly United Nations Intelligence Taskforce) is a fictional military 8 In 2.4, the Doctor falls in love with Madame de Pompadour; in 3.8/3.9, the Doctor becomes human.

organisation that has featured in Doctor Who. on and off, since 1968. Its purpose is to investigate and combat paranormal and extraterrestrial threats to the Earth.

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ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE

DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 4 MARCH 2007
11:17:56 GMT

DAD!"

'HELLO,

Doctor's Daughter! Well, that'll get some folk hot under the collar. But will they
it? Go on, Russell, leak The Doctor's Daughter, and watch the internet explode!
the 1980s, the Doctor Who production team replaced an entry on the office
board - or so the story goes - with a fake title, The Doctor's Wife, in an
to identify the culprit leaking information about the series to the press. Sure
before long, the redtops were reporting that The Doctor's Wife would feature in
next season. (But was the mole caught? That's what I want to know.)
conceiving story ideas, are you ever aiming, specifically, to articulate social,
or religious points of view? You've conceived scripts with that in mind
haven't you? You embarked on The Second Coming, for instance, to advocate
And wrote Queer as Folk to represent gay men and gay issues on TV? Do you
that on Doctor Who ever? Can you? Or is it, above all, about the spectacle, the rush
adventure, the gunfire, the dark tunnels, the tough woman with guns, and all that

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 5 MARCH 2007
01:23:12 GMT

'HELLO, DAD!'

do ask tough questions. That's good! It's tricky, that social/political/religious thing,
really that's life, that's people, that's what you think about the world, and that's
you want to write in the first place. It's not like there's a section of my mind that
things -- like, this scene is about character, the next is all sociology. They're

The
believe
During
planning
attempt
enough,
the

When
political
before...
atheism?
do
of
running?
FROM:

RE:

You
because
why
categorises

in there, in one huge continuum.

all

you're touching on big issues, you've got to keep turning these things, examining

If

looking at the opposite of what you think. For example, as an atheist, I set out

them,

include the 'Old Rugged Cross' sequence in Gridlock to show how good faith can

to

regardless of the existence of God -- how it can unite and form a community, and

be,

Thinking of 4.6 and 4.11 simultaneously made me feel very happy. There's a lot of essentially offer hope.⁹ That was my intention, or my starting point, and yet the real

misery and worry in these e-mails, but last night felt excellent. I went to bed full of me came bleeding through, because it transpires that hope stifles the travellers. It stops

adrenalin, letting all these ideas buzz. But then, on the train back to Manchester this them acting. By uniting, they are passive. The Doctor is the unbeliever. The direct

morning, I realised: 4.6 isn't a blank slate, you dope! It's actually tagged as the Martha consequence of the travellers in the traffic jam singing that hymn is that the Doctor

Trapped In Space episode. She rejoins the Doctor on Earth in 4.4/4.5, but just as a realises that no one is going to help them. There is no higher authority. That's when

mate, not as a companion, and then 4.5 ends with the TARDIS spinning off with her on he starts to break down the rules of that world by jumping from car to car. You could

board. The whole of 4.6 is supposed to be 'Take me home!' And I forgot. Damn. How argue, therefore, that the travellers' faith is misguided.

could I forget? I've promised that to Freema Agyeman. Ah well. The Doctor's daughter It's great discussing this with David Tennant, actually. We fell into devil's advocate: he

argued

for the car-drivers being wrong and passive, and I argued for their goodness. But

is far, far better.

I

think he's right. He got what the script is saying. But I didn't write Gridlock thinking,

P.S You were right, Skins is weird. In Thursday's episode, they went to Russia!

Why?! It's the oddest hybrid of a drama and broad sitcom. Mind you, people say that ⁹ Doctor Who 3.3 is set on New Earth, a planet in the far future, where the population is stuck in an infinitely huge, near-

underworld traffic jam, driving for an eternity in the hope of reaching the real city above.

about my stuff.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
ONE: DEFINITELY MAYBE

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2007

02:34:07 GMTthis is my take on religion. My foremost thought, and my principal job, was to write an

entertaining drama about cats and humans stuck on a motorway. Everything else just

RE: 'HELLO, DAD!'bleeds through. I do have opinions, I do have beliefs, and when I'm writing well -- and I should start calling this BBQ- Ben's Big Questions. That last one is huge!that hymn sequence is one of my favourites, because the hymn changes the course of

When I say something like 'It's your job as a writer', I'm grandstanding a bit orevents -- it's synthesised with my worldview. How can it be any other way? Yes, Queer as falling into lecture mode. I don't think of it as a job. In fact, I've never joined the

Folk is a massively political drama, and yet barely a political speech is made. Not directly. Writers' Guild, out of some strange belief that this isn't a real job. Partly, I feel a fraud,But every word is loaded. Every scene is about the place of gay men in the world. You

as everyone does. But also it's because writing, I think, is nothing to do with unionscould argue that it's entirely political. And it's my politics. It's all me, me, me.

or status or making money; writing is a compulsion. An obsession. You have to be

Of course, I'm aware of the politics with the cheap, easy lines, like the 'massive arrogant to be a writer. You have to be able to walk into a commissioner's office and

weapons of destruction' reference in World War Three. But that barely counts: it's quick demand six million quid to make something. You have to believe that it's worth that,

that it deserves to be made, that it deserves to be seen. I wouldn't be happy just writing

satire, hardly profound. (Although, it satirises a politician on TV lying to the country

this stuff in an exercise book and then leaving it for my own contemplation.

about needing a war; men have died for that, are dying now.) More often, I prefer a

You're right, 'something to say' sounds political, but that doesn't mean I sit here

slyer approach. It boils down to that line in Tooth and Claw, my favourite line in the

thinking, oh, I must announce my thoughts about gay men, about Christianity, about

whole series, when Queen Victoria says of the Koh-I-Noor diamond, 'It is said that

life. Maybe that's when bad scripts are written, when you choose the theme first. I

whoever owns it must surely die,' and the Doctor says, 'Well, that's true of anything, consider
that I've something to say when I've thought of a person, a moment, a single beat
if you wait long enough.' Nice gag, fast, harmless - but actually, under that, it's lethal.
of the heart, that I think is true and interesting, and therefore should be seen.
That's what I really think about a ton of things: religion, superstition, mysticism, It's
because I can imagine Queer as Folk's Nathan Maloney so full of repression, and
legends, all bollocks. That's a whole belief system, trashed. And I was conscious of that. desire,
and lust, and martyrdom, that I have to write him. It's because I've seen, and
I wanted to write that line. I was glad that I thought of a way of putting it so precisely, sometimes
been, Stuart Jones -- it's because I understand him and want to convey that
because it wasn't the time for a polemic. life
-- or because I don't understand him and want to explore him through writing.
I say the process is inevitable, but also I do think it's your job as a writer to say Thinking
about the show that I'm going to do once Doctor Who is over, known only,
something about the world. Why else are you writing? I can't think of a script in which
ridiculously,
as More Gay Men (I don't even know what it's about, just gay men), I can
I haven't done that. I'm being disingenuous if I imply that it's accidental, because I look imagine
a man who is so enraged by something tiny -- the fact that his boyfriend won't
for those chances. I create them. Queen Victoria had been expressing her profound
learn
to swim - that he goes into a rage so great that, in one night, his entire life falls apart.
interest in the afterlife, ever since the dinner table. That's quite a belief system that the
It's
not about the learning to swim at all, of course; it's about the way that your mind can
Doctor knocks for six with one fleeting line. The whole thing has a slight awareness of fix
on something small and use it as a gateway to a whole world of anger and pain. Huge
Rational Man versus Head of the Church. Of course, the real job of the episode is
Man things in life can extrapolate from small details. That's what I love. That's what
I explore.

versus Monster (the werewolf, not Queenie), but I can't, I cannot, write just that. If I write the Learn To Swim scene well - and it could be the spine of the whole drama

then I will be saying something about gay men, about couples, about communication,

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 5 MARCH 2007 22:19:55 GMT

about
anger. But that's the result, not the starting point. For me, anyway. You need to be

RE: 'HELLO,
DAD!' a titanic genius
of Jimmy McGovern-level to start with your theme. It might not even

You say that it's a writer's job to say something about the world ('Why else are you be true of him, actually, because look how quickly he boils down the Great Themes to

writing?'), but do you reckon that's true of all good writers? Or is it perfectly possible ordinary people making ordinary mistakes in kitchens and pubs.

to write something brilliant, beautiful or intensely thought-provoking simply out of There's a great big streak of entertainer in me, but the truth is, if you're writing well,

a desire to tell a ripping yarn, to entertain people? Isn't that why a lot of people start if the end result is brilliant or beautiful, then you are saying something about the

writing? Especially why a lot of people start writing Doctor Who? Then again, there are world. You can't not be. Fawlty Towers! Comedy genius! But I could write a thousand-

plenty of bad writers out there, so are they the ones that don't have something to say? page thesis on what it has to say about frustrated middle-aged men, about England,

(Even the phrase 'something to say' sounds overtly political.) about the 1970s, about dead marriages. It's brilliant because it's honest, and that

means
that it's resonating. Even something like Only Fools and Horses, a much plainer

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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sitcom, is ineffably funny, but it sings when Del Boy says, 'This time next year, we'll be millionaires.' That's when people truly take it to their hearts. They recognise it. That's all of us. Even if you're blubbing at the Doctor and Rose on Bad Wolf Bay in Doomsday, you're empathising, you're feeling it, and there's an echo of every loss you've ever had in that.¹⁰ If it's successful, it is saying something about you, about the world. I'm trying hard to think of something of which that's not true -- and can't. Even the bloody Teletubbies! That's an extraordinary show, it's true brilliance, because somewhere in there they've captured the sheer strangeness, the joy, the bombardment, of being a toddler in a world of colour and shape and noise.

So why do it? Why write? Well, there's no choice. Thinking of these stories is just the way that my brain is shaped. It's hardwired. If I fell out of favour as a writer and ended up as a teacher or something, those stories would still be boiling away. I see them everywhere. I think of them all the time. Just today, I met a woman -- who shall remain nameless - a nice, smiling, 80-year-old woman, really kind and quiet, and I images. Thing is, when they asked me to do Doctor Who for real, I junked all that, sat with her waiting for a taxi. But the more we chatted, the more I thought, actually, almost instantly. (Except for the Autons.) That putative companion -- she had no name you're not nice, there's something sour and hard at the heart of you, and you don't let -- felt too old, not everywoman enough. But I remembered her grandad today ('Where it out; you just sit there smiling. It's not like I solved her conundrum, but she's in my do your ideas come from?' 'Old ideas!')...head now, that fixed smile -- and I am writing her. She'll pop up one day in something He's now Penny's grandad, the stargazer, the man with a telescope in his shed, I write. I want to find out why she's like that. I want to push it further, to the day that someone who's been UFO-spotting all his life, now invigorated by this new world in she cracks. I want to see her let loose with other characters, to see what happens. That's which spaceships fly into Big Ben, Christmas Stars attack, etc. Instead of the skiffle what I do. That's why I do it. band, maybe there's a gang of old codgers who all meet round his house. Instead of I ended up thinking about 4.1 today. (Hooray! With a boo from the Christmas a Neighbourhood Watch, they're an Alien Watch. All a bit hopeless and funny -- and Special corner.) I thought about Penny's grandad. Way back in the '90s, before reviving then, when faced with real aliens in 4.1, they turn out to be magnificent and brave. *Doctor Who was real, I had a sort of rough first new episode in my head, should the* Bit schematic. But it could work. call ever come. A companion-to-be, all told from her point of view, and she's a young

office cleaner, working at night in some sort of smart, high-rise city office, where she

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T OAVIES, TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2007 02:50:39 GMTcan't help noticing... well, maybe they have dinosaurs in the basement! But then I

RE: 'HELLO, DAD!'wondered whether dinosaurs are limiting, and I started to think of computer terminals

asking big questions, I know, but they'll get smaller, I promise. (Actually, I don't.)that could move, casings that could ooze and creep after you, even swallow you.

This I tell you what...led to thoughts about plastic, and then to Auton twins as the Big Bad Bosses, a man

1) What's your favourite colour?and a woman who would always hold hands, because their hands turned out to be

If you were a pizza topping, which one would you be?fused." Of course, the would-be-companion meets the Doctor (his first word to her

What's it like in space?is 'Run!'), and the story had an escape-by-window-cleaner's-cradle sequence - which I

Better?ended up using, actually, in Smith and Jones, but it was cut well before the final draft.

But the point is, the companion had a grandad. He was funny. He played in a skiffle

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2007 02:59:45 GMTband in the local pub. At one point, the whole skiffle band would get involved in...

'HELLO, DAD!'well, I don't know, distracting a guard or something. Funny old codgers. All vague



Blue.10 Bad Wolf Bay in Norway, on a parallel Earth, is where the Doctor last saw Rose, at the end of Doctor Who 2.13. She told the

Pepperoni.Doctor that she loved him, but he was cut off before he could complete his reply.

3) Cold.II The Autons

- animated plastic, often in mannequin form - appeared in two Doctor Who serials in the early 1970s, and

were resurrected by Russell for the first episode of the revived show (1.1).

Much better. Thank you.

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CHAPTER TWO

CATHERINE,
KYLIE, AND
DENNIS

In which Kylie Minogue sings the Muppets,
Russell turns down a fifth series of Doctor Who,
and Charlie Kaufman is told to sod off

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 6 MARCH 2007 23:58:01 GMT

RE: 'HELLO, DAD!'

Today was mental. I can't even begin to type it all right now. Sorry, Ben. I only got four

hours' sleep last night, after watching all of last week's rushes, then getting up at 8am,

so I'm exhausted. Mental days like this tend to come to nothing in the end, so we'll

look back and think, that was so daft, none of it happened. But it's part of the job, so

I'll update you tomorrow. I promise.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH 2007 00:11:02 GMT

RE: 'HELLO, DAD!'

Talk about leaving me on a cliffhanger! Never mind e-mailing me, Russell. For Christ's

sake, get some sleep, and then you can fill me in on your mental Tuesday.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH 2007 12:06:51 GMT

MENTAL TUESDAY



Right. Mental Tuesday. First up, we got interest from Dennis Hopper. Yes, the Dennis

Hopper. American movie star Dennis Hopper! James Strong met his agent on a plane

or something, on his way back from the US, having done ADR with Ryan Carnes for

@yuliasha

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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the Dalek episodes.¹ What a showbiz tale! I could fit Dennis Hopper into 4.X, maybe,

if I can work out who he can play. A nice little cameo? Or a proper big part, I don't

know, like the ship's historian? Mind you, we should be so lucky. I'll believe it when

I see it.

Secondly, back in the world of hard facts, Julie said that Billie Piper is up for doing

four episodes next year. Four! I was hoping for one, two at best. Brilliant. Entirely out

of leftfield. What a day! And as if that weren't enough...

As you know, we've been talking to Jane Tranter about how Donna-like Penny could

be. Completely by chance, Jane had a meeting with Catherine Tate this week, just one

of those general, bigwig, let's-work-together-more sorts of chats. But afterwards Jane

phoned up Julie and said, All Catherine talked about was what a brilliant time she'd

had on last year's Doctor Who Christmas Special. She went on and on about it. She

could be up for a whole series. I think you're in with a chance.' Bollocks, of course. But

it all went a bit mad. This all happened on Tuesday. I bloody love the idea - oh, I love

Donna - so we asked Phil, who relished working with her on set, and then we asked

David, and he just adores Catherine, and now Julie is booking in a lunch to see her!

But it's madness. A woman that busy? With her own TV show? Making movies now?

We'll never get Catherine for a whole series. Still, we can but try. At the very least, we

might be able to get her back for 4.12/4.13. But this will probably just end up

as a

wistful paragraph in these e-mails. TV goes crazy sometimes.

P.S. Will you be at tomorrow's Dub of 3.4?2 Murray Gold's Dalek Choir time!

Though it might be rather strange to see you, because it feels like you live in my head

now. In a good way, I think. See you in Cardiff.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. FRIDAY 9 MARCH 2007 09:23:58 GMT

RE: MENTAL TUESDAY

Good to see you at yesterday's Dub. I love Dubs. How could I not? Watching Doctor

Who on the big screen, stuffing my face full of BBC croissants, seeing you put your feeling ill. Again, poor Torchwood. This is shameful, but I'm feeling too sick to even

foot down ('You worked on that camera shake for hours, I know. But do you know worry about it. However, I described the basics of 4.X to David yesterday evening; as

what? You were wrong!'), and realising that Julie is the biggest Doctor Who geek in the I said it out loud, I really liked it, what little there is, so that's good. It's David's last

room. She'd barely even watched the show three years ago! Any further news on day filming Series Three tomorrow. And it's John Barrowman's 40th birthday. I can't

Catherine?
he's admitting to 40!

other thing worth noting: in the lift at Broadcasting House yesterday, maybe

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 9 MARCH 2007 13:49:19 GMT
you heard me turn to Julie and say, 'Wouldn't [name removed - let's call her Miss X]

RE: MENTAL TUESDAY

a brilliant Penny?' She's a marvellous actress, with a rare flair for comedy. So that's

I'm feeling bleearghhhh. I must have picked up some bug. I've only just got up, after snowballed. We've checked with Jane Tranter, and she loves her too. Hmm, we'll see. It

16 hours' sleep! I feel pale. I want to go back to recording the Maybe, but I'm too busy might be another of those things that comes to nothing, but thinking about [Miss X]

good, because it sort of merges with Catherine Tate, and makes it clear to me that

1 US-based actor Carnes, who played Laszlo in Doctor Who 3.4/3.5, directed by James Strong, was required to record

additional dialogue (ADR) after principal photography had wrapped on the episodes. This is standard practice on TV dramas. Penny should be funny. A bit of a klutz would be good. I can see Penny more clearly

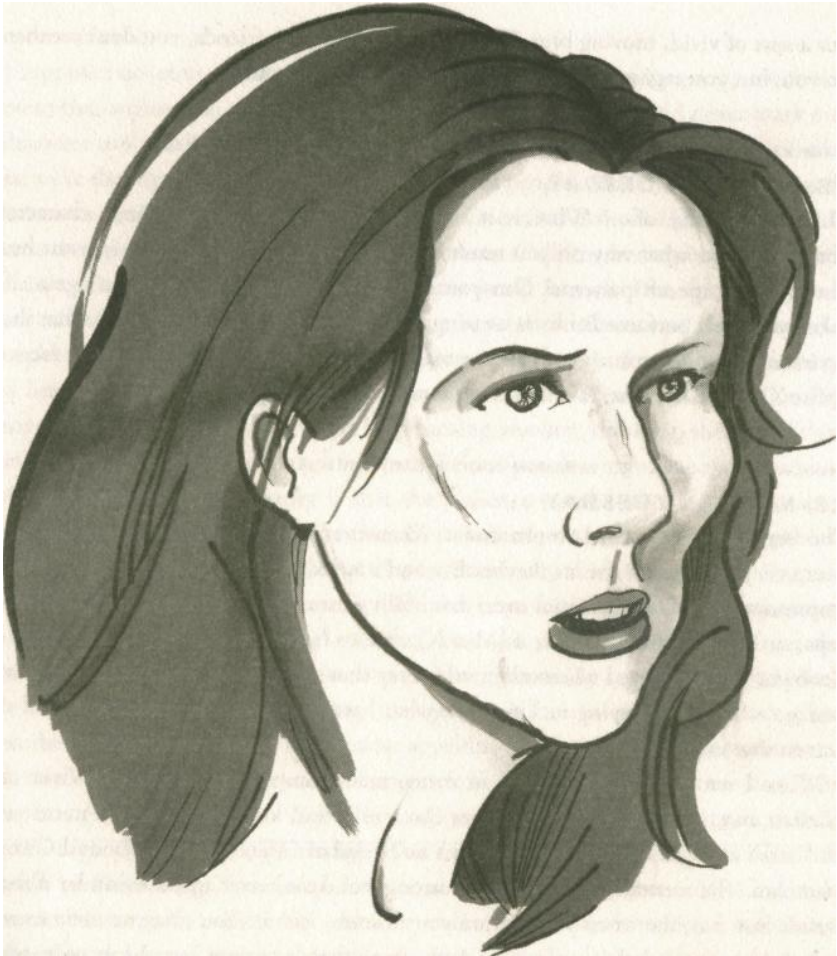
2 The Dub is the first time that the producers view an episode, on a big screen, with finished visuals, sound design, and

Murray

Gold's

score

not in the magical, pictures-of-the-mind way that radio enthusiasts bang on about,



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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

CHA

TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS

but a sort of vivid, moving blur. When you think of your friends, you don't see them, for some people do you, but you register this strong sort of... ? I don't know. I suppose I do know already exactly what she'd do in given circumstances... with the

proviso

that anyone can do anything in any circumstance. You should never mark out FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 9 MARCH 2007 15:32:09 GMT a character so formally that their reactions are fully defined, because none of us is like RE: MENTAL

TUESDAY

that;

we're slightly different every day, with different people, with each different mood. This strong sense of...? What is it that you register at this stage in a character's You have to keep turning characters in the light. One of my favourite Doctor moments conception? In what way do you sense Penny? Can you hear her voice in your head ever is the opening of Gridlock, where he lies about Gallifrey having been destroyed already? Her speech patterns? Can you smell her? No, that's silly. (Then again, if I It's a tiny lie. He omits the fact that his home world is gone. But, for the Doctor, asked you what perfume Penny is wearing, would you know?) Do you know what she'd that's seismic. I had nothing interesting in that scene until I discovered that. I found ad in any given situation? And can you really think about her now without the faces of completely new way of understanding the Doctor, a new way of revealing his history, [Miss X] and Catherine Tate flickering away in your mind's eye? and better still a tiny piece of narrative that sustains the Doctor/Martha relationship

throughout

that episode. If characters keep turning, moving, thinking, shifting, if they FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 10 MARCH 2007 21:56:06 GMT aren't fixed, then they can do anything. Just like real people. RE: MENTAL

TUESDAY

A

prerequisite of a good story is that the audience watches the central character The 'seeing' thing is hard to pin down. Characters really are blurs, but that doesn't - or characters - change, even if the characters themselves aren't aware of that process mean they're vague; it means they're alive and unpredictable. And I don't carry actors' happening. I'm trying to think of a film or drama in which that doesn't happen. impressions and characteristics over, thankfully. There's a distinct Donna in my head, I'm sure they exist, but... do you see? They've been forgotten. Even in something separate from Catherine. Even if [Miss X] were to become Penny, Penny has a life of as simple as High School Musical - in fact, that's so simple and underwritten, the her own. (I get annoyed when other

writers say that characters have a life of their own, change is poking out of the carcass so even blind passers-by can give it a good feel. and now here I am saying it. I suppose what I mean is, Penny has a life beyond the school jock becomes an arts boy; the geeky girl breaks out of her math class; actress that ends up playing her.) even the villainous valley girl, in the most appalling and sudden about-turn, becomes

When I wrote *Queer as Folk*, I had strong mental impressions of Stuart, Vince and nice (that's a failed change, because it comes from nowhere, and demeans her). The

Nathan, but then when I came to write *Queer as Folk 2*, long after they'd been cast and template, *Grease*, does it even better, because you really feel them change in that. If

had acted in eight episodes, I still didn't write Aidan Gillen, Craig Kelly and Charlie a story is good, then someone changes. You can apply that principle from *Grease* to

Hunnam. The mental versions were far stronger and took over again. I wonder if that's *Hamlet to Teletubbies. There is no low-art and high-art divide here. My God, that*

weird. But it is like when you picture your friends, isn't it? You imagine their essence. scene in *Monsters, Inc.* where the monsters realise that their entire world is founded

I don't imagine their hair colour, or teeth, or clothes, or crow's feet; I sort of imagine on hurting children - look at that for a change! Two galumphing cartoon characters

their dynamic, the place that they occupy. Penny has that dynamic already. She came making a shattering realisation about their world and their role in sustaining it. A truly

born with it. I'm talking, for example, about how to make her funny, but actually epic moment. It's stunning.

that's e-mail rationalisation after the event. Just look at her, from the moment she was

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 10 MARCH 2007 22:41:10 GMT

conceived: she's jilted, walking past the TARDIS; with her posh mum, going to see her

grandad, when she walks into an alien invasion. That's already essentially funny. Even **RE: MENTAL TUESDAY**

her sadness isn't tragedy; it's light and sweet. She felt like that from the start, from the »I suppose I do know already exactly what she'd do in given circumstances... with

moment I thought of
her. the proviso that
anyone can do anything in any circumstance.«

But there's no smell. You've got me there! And I don't know where she went to If a character can do anything, what stops them becoming a sort of Everyman? What

school, what she had for breakfast, what knickers she's wearing, unless the scene needs makes them distinct?

me to know. If I do write Penny having breakfast, I'll write something that will fit her.

(It's black coffee. She'd just have black coffee. If it weren't Doctor Who, she'd also have FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 10 MARCH 2007 23:15:54 GMT

a cigarette. Yes, that's very Penny.) Some people draw up huge lists of that background **RE: MENTAL TUESDAY**

stuff before they start writing. Well, I don't. That doesn't mean you shouldn't. It works I suppose what I'm saying is that a character can act in any way in character. They can

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S	CHA
TALE				
TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS				
be good, bad, happy, sad, liars, lovers, but in a way that's still unique to themselves.	help explain what I'm thinking. Which is not much, because now we're in a Penny/To stretch the metaphor: keep turning them, but not so fast and so often that they	Donna flux. Which woman is it going to be? But the Donna stuff is fun. I imagine	thatbecome	
blurred.		she failed		
to 'walk in the dust' after The Runaway Bride. That's what life is like, isn't it?				
			You	
meet an amazing man, spend one night with him, think you're going to change	FROM: BENJAMIN			
COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 10 MARCH 2007 23:38:19 GMT		your life... then		
you wake up the next morning and he's gone, there are bills to be paid,	RE: MENTAL			
TUESDAY		your flat		
needs cleaning, and you never quite get around to it. Poor Donna, she had	Sometimes, surely,			
the fact that people are incapable of change is enough of a story in	her chance and			
blew it. If only she could have a second chance. (I could call 4.1 Second				
			Chance!)	
<i>Mind you, there's no way that Donna could come across the Doctor again</i>				
byitself? Take Madame Ranyevskaya in The Cherry Orchard.				
			chance;	
she'd have to be looking for him. A very different entry for a companion. I'd				
			have	
to dump the whole jilted-by-her-boyfriend strand that I'd planned for Penny. But	FROM: RUSSELL			
T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SUNDAY 11 MARCH 2007 00:03:44 GMT				
			the	
marvellous thing is, that strand is still true, because we've already done that with	RE:			
MENTAL TUESDAY				
			Donna	
in The Runaway Bride. Not just jilted, but betrayed by her man.	Yes, but the realisation of			
that is a change for the audience. I don't think Madame				
			Anyway.	
I had a good meeting with Gareth Roberts today, about the Agatha Christie	Ranyevskaya			
leaves The Cherry Orchard truly aware of herself or really having moved				
			episode.	
Lovely ideas. But it's going to be tough, that one. I can tell. And a brilliant	ton from Act One,			
but the world has changed around her and other characters have				
			meeting	
with Matt Jones about Torchwood, leaving me thinking, damn, everyone's	grown in wisdom,			
so she acts as a still point - and that's equally powerful.				
			episode	
is better than mine. A rising bile of fear that I'm already very behind and will				

But I don't know that you can take this principle and apply it to drama too

like this for months now, maybe for the whole year. I did no proper work at the consciously. Can you sit down and say, 'I'm going to write about change! My theme is

either. David was the only living soul I saw. But I had some nice thoughtschange'...? Rather, I think it's inherent in a story, any story. That's why they're stories.

4.X - obvious thoughts, but ones that I hadn't crystallised before, namely that aThings start on Page 1 and are different by the final page, or else why is the tale being

movie' needs a supporting cast to climb through the wreckage, some of whomtold? The Goldilocks who runs away from the three bears is a very different girl from

live, some of whom will die, which means, of course, that some lovely people mustthe one who started out into the forest. The change might not last, she might well go

and some bastards will survive. I'm thinking we'll have a sweet, middle-aged orback to stealing other people's food and trashing their furniture, but that's why the ageing couple - both will die. Heartbreaking. A feisty would-be companion - she'llstory ends when it does. survive. An arrogant young businessman - he might survive, because you'll want him to

That sort of thing. Fab.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2007 22:27:29 GMT

MENTAL

TUESDAY

II

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK

TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2007 22:54:09 G MT

Let the record state: Julie had lunch with Catherine today, assuming that she'd say she's too **RE: MENTAL TUESDAY II**

busyforafullseries-

said no? That is so mad. But oh... Penny! (I almost used a sad

butshescreamed,andstartedplanninghowtomovetoCardiff!!WHAT?! I still don't smiley there. I feel dirty now.) This will sound pathetic, but I'll miss her. Donna would

believe this is going to happen. Surely Catherine's agent is going to rugby-tackle her? be AMAZING, and the repartee between Catherine and David to die for, but poor

Imagine a whole season of Tennant and Tate! It's a casting director's dream. Can't be Penny Carter becomes just another Character In Search Of An Author. No second true. Can't

be. chances for
Penny. No first chances, even. End of.

Also, I had to go into Peter Fincham's extremely posh office today, and explain why

I will not be doing a Series Five. Ohh, he's not happy. It was very awkward.
Mind FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2007 23:18:44 GMT

you, it did strike me that he has no idea how much work Doctor Who actually is,
how RE: MENTAL TUESDAY II

much work I actually do, and absolutely no awareness of the fact that so many of
us That alone makes this whole e-mail chain worthwhile, because you must be the
only

have had to up sticks and go and live in Cardiff for years on bloody end. Instead,
he other person in the whole world who will miss Penny. No one else had that stuff

just supports us with money and publicity and trust and... oh, I shouldn't
complain, described to them. Not Phil, not Julie, not anyone. I don't like to flog it,
because

should I? it
sounds daft, but I really do miss her too. That lovely, lonely, wistful scene of her

Since we started this project, it's been unusually busy and showbizzy on Doctor Who.

It's normally 'Can we shift that scene to Penarth?' These are weird times. But it does

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

CHAPTER

TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS

walking past the TARDIS late at night, in a city centre, in the rain - I know I hadn't done much with her, but that moment was crystallised perfectly. In a really strange corner of my mind, I honestly believe that she sort of exists somewhere. It really is that

Six Characters in Search of an Author stuff. God, when I first saw that play -- I'd barely

ever written anything at that point -- I was stunned by the central conceit, and really took it to heart, and now -- and I'm never going to admit this again, and you can't print it anywhere, ever, because I sound like a nonce - I still believe that Penny Carter is walking past that TARDIS, but now she walks on and never meets the Doctor. That feels real.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2007 23:31:28 GMT

RE: MENTAL TUESDAY II

Shall we light a candle for Penny?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 13 MARCH 2007 23:37:51 GMT

RE: MENTAL TUESDAY II

You light a candle. I'll light a cigarette.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 14 MARCH 2007 22:45:53 GMT

RE: MENTAL TUESDAY II

Catherine's agent phoned today. We expected her to blast us with 'WHAT THE HELL D'YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?! SOD OFF, CATHERINE IS BUSY!' But no, Catherine is definitely tempted. And then I spent an hour on the phone to Catherine herself. She so wants to do it! This is madness.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 19 MARCH 2007 22:52:20 GMT

AN UPDATE

Russell! I'm dropping you a quick line to touch base. I hope all is well. (Has Catherine said yes yet?!) I imagine you're extra busy in the run-up to Wednesday's Series Three press launch, and then transmission next week...?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 19 MARCH 2007 23:25:25 GMT

RE: AN UPDATE

Mark the date in your diary: today, Catherine Tate officially said yes! Bloody hell. This is so brilliant. What a cast!

But we've got to get it right. I'm worried about how other writers will handle Donna.

Not Steven Moffat, obviously. But it needs a delicate touch not to go too funny or too



broad... says the man who, in *The Runaway Bride*, had her swing across the Flood Chamber and smack into the wall! And when do we tell people? Everything leaks.

Freema hasn't even debuted as Martha yet. This is going to get very complicated.

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TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

then
he phoned Julie on Thursday and insisted he'd been serious. (I could waste time
Announce this too soon and it'll mess up Freema/Martha. We've got to keep that

debut clean and successful, because Freema is so brilliant. She deserves a big
launch. fancying Will, but he's way out of my league. He's just nice to look at.) 4.X was
alwaysWe can't clutter it by announcing the next companion. I think Penny will have to
live going to have a one-off companion, or maybe a couple of one-off companions, but
ifon as a disguise: we'll ask people to write Penny as a placeholder name. it
were Kylie... well, no, it won't be. Nothing will happen. But I might have to have

Catherine's casting has, at least, jumpstarted my thinking. I've been worried
all lunch with Kylie, and that alone is worth it.weekend, back here in Manchester,
because I've done very little thinking. Well, none. I Plus, on Monday, I've got to phone
Dennis Hopper, who is interested. This is so weird.worried that Manchester had become
divorced from work, become a place where I Kylie Minogue and Dennis
Hopper! We really did start this e-mail correspondence atswitch off. But today I could click
back a bit, because the news of Catherine's casting the best time ever. It's never this
mad!was so exciting. Of course, I also started thinking of problems: Donna would actively

have to be looking for the Doctor, so she can't turn right in 4.11, as opposed to
left FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 24 MARCH 2007 17:00:10 GMT

in 4.1, and become The Woman Who Never Met The Doctor. It takes the charm
off **RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH**that 4.11 story slightly now that it's Donna instead
of Penny. The magic of it has gone. Kylie Minogue? Oh, c'mon! For the next spin-off
series, please can I have Kylie andOh well. It's a strong story, and strong stories survive
changes. (Have I told you that Dennis travelling the universe in a camper van, solving
murder mysteries? Thanks.Rose will appear in 4.11, meeting Donna, because the parallel-
world walls are breaking

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 24 MARCH 2007 17:32:35 GMT

down? Bloody glorious.)

Meanwhile, major panic building on Torchwood. I'm running out of time. With
all **RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH**

the press launch stuff happening this week, I'm just too busy. You wouldn't believe
the I forgot to tell you, I had the strangest clashing of the Maybe/real world the other
day,

in a
way that doesn't happen often. I was walking down Oxford Street, and someone
amount of phone calls and planning that goes into a simple bloody launch. Oh, I don't
shouted
hello, came running up for a kiss and a hug and all that -- and it was [Miss

even want to type about it. It just feels awful.

the last days of Penny Carter's short half-life, [Miss X] had advanced way up the

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 22 MARCH 2007 15:1 3:46 GMT

possible Pennys. We'd run [Miss X]'s name past Peter Fincham, and it turns out

loves her, and her dates are free, so for a couple of days, while I never believed

THE PRESS LAUNCH

the Catherine Tate thing would happen, the lovely [Miss X] really, really became

Well, last night was fun. I'm still buzzing. It was weird, all those celebs, wasn't it?

for me. Meeting her in Oxford Street completely out of the blue... oh, it was

Looking around and seeing Dawn French and Jonathan Ross and Jo Whaley, like one

I'm not kidding, and you're the only person who might properly understand

of those events that you see in the papers, only now it's for Doctor Who!

actually found it hard to talk to her. It was like looking at Penny. The fact that

would never exist. The fact that [Miss X] would never even know this. She was

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 24 MARCH 2007 16:44:56 GMT

about what she was up to, but I was, literally, stumbling and stammering and

RE: **THE** **PRESS**
LAUNCH failing to say all

the nice polite things that I should have said. I just mumbled a bit,

The press launch was brilliant. Best thing was, I had a good few drinks with you, Phil with this weird collision in my head, and then walked away, thinking how strange it and Andy, and didn't want to carry on and get leathered, which is really good for me. all is..

I'm saying this because, when I'm actually writing, I suspect there are going to be a few

Dark Night Of The Soul e-mails -- oh Lordy -- so it's good to report the times when

I FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 26 MARCH 2007 23:41:45 GMT

feel happy. And The Times Caitlin Moran was there, too. Did you see her? She said to **RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH**

me, 'You always write about unrequited love.' I've been thinking about that a lot

X)! In

list of

that he

that

Penny

bizarre.

this, I

Penny

talking

failing to say all

since. Crumbs! This has been a mad day. So mad that it's made me say 'crumbs'. All the

Not sure what it says about me. Not sure that it's healthy. way to London... TO MEET KYLIE MINOGUE!!! To sell her the next Christmas

In other news, Kylie Minogue wants to appear in Doctor Who. Special. Then all the way back to Cardiff. This is INSANE!!!

Yes, Kylie Minogue! Ha ha ha ha. Kylie was lovely. And tiny. I even sang a duet with her. No kidding. We were talking

I wish I could see your face as you read that sentence. Don't worry, it won't happen. about the Muppets, and she said, 'What's that song that Kermit's nephew used to

Will Baker, Kylie's creative director, was at the press launch and said how marvellous sing on the stairs?' I sang the first line, she sang the second, and then we both sang

it'd be to get Kylie in Doctor Who. He'd had a bit to drink, so I didn't believe it. But

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS

the entire verse! Bloody crazy. She liked the sound of Christmas, but visibly
balked
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY
27 MARCH 2007 00:18:33 GMT

at the thought of three/four weeks' filming, so we'll see. Her life seems so barmy
and
about it all tomorrow. Although, she's sitting down to
watch
1) The Medusa Cascade is where 4.12/4.13 takes
place. It's just an area of space. *The Runaway Bride tonight. Imagine that! But
still, Julie and I were on top form, so I* Earth is
stolen, along with five other planets, and taken to the Medusa Cascade to know we couldn't
have done more to convince her, and that makes me happy
enough.
Dalek energy-converter thing to, er, do We did good
work.
Kill everything, probably. They've always wanted to be the supreme life form,

Also, Julie saw Billie yesterday afternoon, and Billie is definitely saying four
episodes.
4.13, and then doing the entire universe, leaving
only them alive? Audacious! The Master mentions the Medusa Christmas Special 2008 - filmed
as part of our Series Four run, God help us -
which Cascade in 3.13. He says, 'You sealed the rift at
the Medusa Cascade,' nicely placing a would allow her to come back as and when, and film
further Specials alongside David. Big Rift there,
because with universe-walls breaking down, and Rose returning, that's But that's all in a state
of flux. If a lot of Series Four is building up to Rose's return,
I'm going to be needed somehow. thinking, do we film a scene for
4.1, right at the end, a glimpse of Rose? End of 4.1, 2)
Good. Me too. story over, danger past, the Doctor standing by the TARDIS, about to give
Donna one I just busked with Kylie. I was phoned
up at lam. 'Kylie wants to meet you today. of those classic 'come aboard' speeches, but Donna
interrupts, 'Hang on a minute,' She's flying to
Stockholm tomorrow.' I got on the train, which turned out to be full of and runs off, leaving
the Doctor stranded. That's quite funny. She runs over to
the fans on their way to see Chain Reaction. (How
funny you watched that, knowing what crowd -- police, army, ambulances -- looking for her
mum, just so that she can give you know.) Then I met
the great lady, and I said... well, that they're aboard a spaceship her the car keys. In a rush, a
panic, Donna shoves the keys at a woman in the
crowd called the Titanic, it's hit by meteorites, it
destroys Buckingham Palace at the end (she

- 'Her name's Sylvia Noble. Give her these. It's that red Toyota over there' - and

runs loved that), and her part would be a waitress who joins with the Doctor to escape the

off to her new life. Reveal the woman that she gave the keys to: it's Rose! Just standing, wreckage. You think that she's going to be the new companion, but then she does

watching, waiting. That could be nice. Or too inward-looking? But thrilling! There's something towards the end, to defend the Doctor, but something rash - she picks up a

an undoubted 'ooooh!' in that moment. laser-gun and kills someone - in a situation that the Doctor could have talked his way

Yes, 4.1 might need tricks like that. I'm worried that the events in the Medusa out of, so effectively she fails Companion Academy. He's disappointed in her. She's left

Cascade in 4.12/4.13 are much harder to foreshadow than 'Vote Saxon' in Series behind at the end, because she's Good But Not Good Enough. For the record, I said,

Three.3 Is Series Four's running thread quite un-runnable? What do you think? 'I don't know this character's name. Maybe something like Chrissie.' What?! Bollocks

that. Chrissie?! What a terrible name. The ship is staffed by aliens - although they'llFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 26 MARCH 2007 23:56:02 GMT look exceedingly human - so she should have a nice, simple, sci-fi name.**RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH**

You've met Kylie? (Yeah, well, I met McFly last month, so... er... there! Yeah, Russell FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 27 MARCH 2007 11:19:44 GMT

- McFly!) Were you able to tell Kylie much about who she'd play? **RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH**

I've just got back from watching Catherine interview David on stage at the Duchess I met Kylie! Ha ha ha ha. Fell asleep laughing, woke up laughing. But I'd sooner pullTheatre, Covent Garden, for Radio 4 show Chain Reaction. They were brilliant together. McFly, so you win. Of course, if I met McFly, then I would. This is a fact.Hilarious. They talked tons about Doctor Who, and said nice things about you, which

will probably be cut out of the broadcast show, and didn't let slip that they'll be back FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 28 MARCH 2007 23:14:25 GMT

on our screens, together, for the duration of Series Four. Mad, mad times indeed. **RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH**

Two things:

thoughts today. In 4.2 or 4.3, the Doctor should be in the TARDIS, talking away

1) What is the Medusa Cascade?
'I lost my people in the Time War...' He's wandering around the console, all quietly,

2) Rose Tyler at the end of 4.1? Of course I love it! But then, I'm a ming-mong.
introspective. And then Donna says, 'How d'you spell Dalek?' He looks up - and she's

notes! Little pad and pencil! He'd hate that. 'You're taking notes?!' 'Well, you

all the time.' 'I don't have people on board to take notes!' 'Oh, are there rules,'³ Mr Saxon is a running reference throughout Series Three, foreshadowing the Master's return at the end of the series in his guise as UK Prime Minister Harold Saxon (played by John Simm).
then?' 'In this case, yes.'
'Well, I'd better write them down.' These two characters write

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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TALE

TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS

themselves. But they mustn't bicker for too long. 'I'd better write them down' would be upon terrorists? Or are the meteorites a coincidence? Maybe the saboteurs should, followed by a pause, then a smile from the Doctor. He likes her. Without a word, she um, magnetise the hull to attract them? The murderous creatures should be really puts down the notebook and asks him something real. That's how I write - little flashes slim, tight metal. Sexy! Like Kylie's stage-show Cybermen.⁵ Or maybe, since this is of dialogue. In fact, 'dialogue' doesn't cover it; that's them, that's the dynamic, that's a Christmas Cruise, the ship could have Robot Angel staff - beautiful golden faces, how they are. And then if you use that notebook somewhere vital later in the plot... smiling cherub masks. Polite voices, great for killers. Like butlers. White tunics.

Talking of something real, it's about time that someone asked the Doctor, if the Time Metal wings. Ooh, haloes! Deadly haloes! Maybe they're programmed to go murderous. Lords are dead, why he can't go back in time to find/save them. No one's done that yet. once the ship is hit? Ah, if they're programmed to go mad once the ship is hit, it is the Also, that's a nod to the series finale: Dalek Caan, the last surviving Dalek, will have same plan. It's part of the sabotage. I'm loving the sound of Robot Angels voyaged into the Time War itself (forbidden! Impossible!) to pull out Davros. It will It all feels nice and creative, this. That good mood is persisting. I'm genuinely excited/have sent Caan insane - a weird, broken, strangely holy Dalek, on a plinth, spotlight, scared about Saturday's transmission of Smith and Jones. That helps. Even seeing therevered, talking strangely un-Dalek-ly, more like a mad oracle or prophet. Caan could *Radio Times this week was thrilling. I'm a fanboy at heart.* be a hero in the end. Funny how all these stories flow into each other.

I'm so excited about seeing Donna again, and everything that she can do, the sheer

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 29 MARCH 2007 02:41:28 GMT

energy she brings to it, so the opening of 4.1 is really taking shape. Oh, the moment that **RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH** Donna sees the Doctor! The moment that he sees her! (It should absolutely coincide with I spent three hours this afternoon re-entering numbers into my new mobile phone. the appearance of the Big Snarling Beast.) My worry, though, is that 4.1 starts as very My old one was stolen on Saturday. I'm still receiving text messages that were sent to Donna-heavy - do we see the Doctor at all, until she does? - which could, given the size me days ago, but were delayed by the bar on my stolen phone. There's one from you of this star casting, make it feel like The Catherine Tate Show. I must write up the Doctor that reads, 'Oh, I hope you've got a new phone to receive texts...' I hadn't. I'm on themore than I usually would when introducing a new companion. Interesting, that sort of train to London TO MEET KYLIE!!! worry, because it's only half a script-worry; the other half is an external, how-this-episode- A question: you know the ending to 4.X already (the Titanic destroys Buckingham will be perceived worry. That's an equal part of my job, let's not pretend otherwise. Palace, Kylie is left behind, etc), but do you always start writing stories

with endings

A lot of knives will be out for Donna/Catherine, in that tabloid world. They always in sight? Isn't a leap into the dark ever more thrilling?

are, for successful women. I must, in the script, account for that 'Doctor Who Becomes

Comedy' backlash - give Catherine good, strong, emotional stuff to balance it. This FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 29 MARCH 2007 23:12:14 GMT

how-the-programme-is-perceived thing is more of a factor on Doctor Who than any **RE: THE PRESS LAUNCH**

other show I've ever written. The purist writer in me says that this is wrong, that the I always know the ending. Well, usually. Emotionally. I know how it feels. I knew, from

story is the thing, that it's not the writer's job to think of external issues - I'm a writer, the first moment, that The Runaway Bride would end with the Doctor saying, 'Her

not a salesman. But also this is the most successful and popular thing that I've ever name was Rose,' and more particularly that it would end with the Doctor and Donna

written, so who says those external worries are bad? Maybe they've helped! in an ordinary street, with snow. I knew that Casanova would end with Old Casanova

Also, since Donna has seen the Empress and the creation of the Earth in The Runaway dying, and Young Casanova dancing into darkness. Right from the moment that Queer

Bride, 4.1 has to be bigger.4 It has to amaze her. I'm wondering about a portal, through as Folk was conceived, I knew that it would end with Stuart and Vince dancing on a

which these Big Snarling CGI Beasts come. Yes, they've become plural. I want size. I podium - and I knew why. Everything else - that poor, dumped boyfriend of Vince's,

think seeing 3.1 at last week's press launch, seeing the Judoon stomp across the Moon Stuart's loneliness, the circling drug-killer in the club - came later. But the central

on the big screen, has put that thought in my head. I want packs of monsters in 4.1. image - two men, eternally happy in a state of unrequited love - was a given. That

Big worry about 4.X today: the Titanics forcefields are deactivated by saboteurs, was why I was writing the whole drama, right from the start, to reach that moment of

happiness.

It's as crucial as the first moment of thinking of the story. An ending is what

because someone wants someone dead, so the ship is hit by meteorites; once wrecked,
the
story is. For me, anyway.

murderous creatures should break out of the hold -- but is that the same plan?

The same saboteurs? It should be a different plan, surely? Saboteurs upon assassins I know that 4.1 will end with... well, it's a no-brainer, that one: the Doctor and

4 The Empress is a half-arachnid, half-human creature - a member of the alien Racnoss.
Showgirl tour featured dancers in costumes inspired by the design of the Cybermen.

5 Kylie's 2005

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS			

Donna spinning off into space, in theTARDIS, and happy. And 4.13 will end with will he be appeased?the TARDIS circling above the Earth, and the Doctor making an address to the entire

planet, welcoming them back home, promising to protect them for ever. Sometimes, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2007 18:07:05 GMT

I swear, I could write those scenes first. Except I couldn't, because I can never write **RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE**....scenes out of order. I physically cannot do it. Lots of writers do. Paul Abbott does, So you're the one who bought the Mine All Mine DVD? I knew we'd find that mysteryhappily. If he gets stuck on a scene, he skips to a later one. If I get stuck, I sit there, shopper in the end. Actually, it's turned sunny again here. My supernatural powers arestuck, until it's resolved, because the scenes that come later can't exist if they aren't on the wane. I knew I should have wished for Freddie first. The Hour Before Doctorinformed by where they've come from. *Who\ Exciting!*

I read an interview with Charlie Kaufman, the man who wrote Being John Malkovich and Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (both staggeringly brilliant movies), in which FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2007 18 :16:13 GMTthe said, so forcefully, that any writer who starts a script knowing where it's going to **RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE**...end is morally bankrupt, that they had forfeited their right to stand as a dramatist, Don't you ever wish that you didn't know what happens next? Isn't this the hour whenbecause they weren't open to the infinite possibilities of storytelling. I thought, sod off! you wish that you were 'just' a viewer? What are the Judoon? How does a LondonFirstly, any writer telling another writer how they must work can always sod off, no hospital end up on the Moon? What persuades the Doctor to invite Martha Jonesmatter how brilliant they are. (That's why I'd never want any of these musings to be aboard the TARDIS? Right now, aren't you wishing that you didn't know?taken as a template for How To Write. It happens to be How / Write, that's all.) But

also I disagree so strongly with Kaufman, I even think he's lying, even lying to himself. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2007 18:23:47 GMTIf you take away his dictatorial side, it's a fascinating thought; it did make me want **RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE**...to start writing something with no idea of where it's going, just to see what happens. Equally, what I don't get is the worry. Will it be crap? Will I be ashamed? Will it let meMaybe it would be the best thing I've ever written. But the problem is, I'm not Charlie down? Gareth Roberts called it, marvellously, that sense of 'anticipointment' - all tooKaufman, only he is. Three pages in, I'd have got interested in something, so I'd see ready for an episode of Doctor Who to be rubbish. That first episode of Time and thethe story, my story, the through-line, and immediately that would suggest its ending. *Rani, that was a deep, dark trough..* .6I couldn't stop that happening.

It's fascinating how many successful writers start talking like censors -- saying,
'You Text message from: Ben

*must write like this, you must wo? write like that.' The very people that
should embrace* Sent: 31-Mar-2007 22:02

freedom, and the right to make mistakes, become the people laying down laws.
That Full Moon tonight. Dazzlingly bright over Chiswick. How perfect.

Bonfire of the Vanities goes on and on. Stoked by writers! Don't they realise that
they're How many kids must be looking up at the Moon right now, as they

becoming
dictators? draw the
curtains before bed, thinking of spaceships and Time

and Judoon?FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2007 16:26:44 GMT Lords

AND NOW ON BBC
ONE... Text

message from: RussellI've been praying for rain, to increase our Smith and Jones viewing figures,
and I just Sent: 31-Mar-2007 22:04got back to the flat... and there's a
violent storm blowing across Cardiff Bay! I am

funny, I just stood on my balcony ten minutes ago andnow wondering about the extent of my supernatural
powers. I am going to wish for a

the same thing. The Moon is bright and clear over the Bay.billion quid and Freddie Ljungberg, and see what
happens. Fingers crossed.

was meant to be.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 31 MARCH 2007 17:29:54 GMT

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 1 APRIL 2007 10:30 :02 GMT**RE: AND NOW ON BBC**
ONE... RE: AND NOW ON
BBC ONE...It's sunshine here in Chiswick. I might start praying, too. If it gets to 6pm and
there's

8.2
million viewers! With a peak of 8.9 million! And a 39.5 per cent audience share! Bystill no
sign of rain, I'll offer up my Mine All Mine DVD as a sacrifice to Tlaloc. But

6
Broadcast in 1987, Time and the Rani was Sylvester McCoy's debut serial as the Seventh Doctor.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS

the time that's consolidated, it'll be higher than last year's series opener. Oh Lordy.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 1 APRIL 2007 14:45:20 GMT

RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE...

Amazing figures! Tlaloc must have appreciated Mine All Mine.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 1 APRIL 2007 19:27:08 GMT

RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE...

I had some 4.1 thoughts last night. It was one of those nights when I thought, right, I'm going to go out and get rat-arsed in some club and end up in a Bute Town gutter. But this town is so bloody small. After an hour in one of the two gay clubs in the whole of Cardiff, I was besieged by Doctor Who staff, most of whom I don't even know ('Hello, I'm the man who's building The Sarah Jane Adventures website) or, bless 'em, friendly Cardiff gays who'd seen Smith and Jones - but dozens of them. It was doing my head in, so I left after a few drinks. But Cardiff on a Saturday night is like Beirut, so I had to walk all the way back to the Bay. I wasn't consciously thinking about scripts at all. I was too fed up. But by the time I got to the Bay, lovely and cold and desolate, at about 2.30am, and sat down on the seafront for a cigarette, a few things clicked

into



place. That often happens. You go for a walk and it's not the walk that clicks things into place, but the end of the walk --

I like the idea of the portal - a shimmering circle that you'd step through - to another world. I keep calling the portal the 'Venting'. It's not a good word or particularly appropriate, but that's what my head is saying right now. An alien world beyond the Venting. Nice alien vistas, a bit of a temple, where we discover the last survivors of that world. They've been overrun by these wild dog things. The rest of the population has been eaten. (The wild dogs should be called Vor-something. Vorlax? Vorleen? No, Vorlax is nice.) The survivors have opened the Venting to, literally, vent their world, to give the Vorlax a taste of fresh meat, and so saving their planet. Oh, the Doctor's anger! 'You've got a problem and what do you do? You PASS IT ON!' At the end, he seals the portal, leaving these wise old dying bastards to their fate. That's harsh. But good. threatening to break through any second. Beyond that, huge plains of Vorlax. Can we

A great image came to me today. In fighting just the one Vorlax, the Doctor is make pictures that big? This is expensive. And how the hell do the Doctor and Donnanowondering where it came from, and someone points out that the first sightings were survive that? Even if the Doctor seals off the alien world, what about the hundredsa

boarded-up house. The Welsh valleys are full of boarded-up houses. There's something of Vorlax on the loose on Earth? Does he find a way to kill them? If so, he'd give that automatically spooky about them. The Doctor and Donna are approaching the house. solution to the alien world; he wouldn't just seal them off. But I want him to seal them. As they get closer, they realise that the wooden boards over the windows are straining... off, I'll think on. Great image, though. moving... buckling... with a scratching and a scrabbling. In that moment, the boards

rip off-- and hundreds of Vorlax pour out, chasing and killing! There are people running FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 2 APRIL 2007 10:31:53 GMT

and screaming. Huge pictures. An ordinary one-monster episode explodes, suddenly, RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE...into an epic. On the alien world, an image of an even greater threat to come: wooden How do you know when to start writing? All these images only exist in your head right gates to the city, behind which there are millions of Vorlax, snarling and snapping, now, yes? (Pretending for a moment that these e-mails hadn't happened!) At what

point

do you begin to write the actual script?

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 3 APRIL 2007 02:34:17 GMT

a
 year, and it's not like there's a long list of friends who might be taking up otherRE:
 AND NOW ON BBC
 ONE... evenings,
 because this lifestyle has excluded them, slowly, over the years. All the rest of

the
 time, I cancel or simply don't appear. They all think I'm writing. The truth is,
 I'mHow do I know when to start writing? I leave it till the last minute. And then I
 leave it

more
 likely to be not writing, just sitting on my own, panicking. My boyfriend has
 thesome more. Eventually, I leave it till I'm desperate. That's really the word,
 desperate. I

patience
 of a saint. Or he's a sap to put up with me. No, I'll go for saint.always think, I'm not
 ready to write it, I don't know what I'm doing, it's just a jumble

It's
 ridiculous, because I can prove, conclusively, that the solutions start to appearof
 thoughts in a state of flux, there's no story, I don't know how A connects to B, I

every
 time I do start writing. A straightforward example: I spent ages not writing
 DoctorI don't know anything! I get myself into a genuine state of panic. Except panic
 sounds

Who
 3.11, *Utopia, just sitting in a black cloud. There was a concrete problem: I*
*had*exciting. It sounds all running-around and adrenalised. This is more like a
 black cloud

no
 idea why the TARDIS would end up at the end of the universe. Even though
 that'sof fear and failure. Normally, I'll leave it till the deadline, and I haven't even
 started

where
 this episode had to be set. Now, with hindsight, it's easy: the Doctor reacts
 badlywriting. This has become, over the years, a week beyond the deadline, or
 even more. It

to
 the arrival of Captain Jack, because Jack is an immortal, a fixed point in time,
 thecan be a week -- or weeks -- past the delivery date, and / haven't started

writing. In fact,

Doctor

can barely look at him, feels it in his guts, and the TARDIS feels the same. But I don't have delivery dates any more. I go by the start-of-preproduction date. I consider

imagine

that you don't know those words in italics, that they haven't been imagined that to be my real deadline. And then I miss that. It's a cycle that I cannot break. I

yet.

Without them, the sheer coincidence of a) Jack arrives, and b) at the same time, simply can't help it. It makes my life miserable.

the

TARDIS is thrown to the end of the universe, is an awful, crippling, terrible, un-

My inability to start on time is crippling. Any social event -- people's birthdays,

writable

coincidence. The trouble is, because I'm telling you this in hindsight, the

drinks with friends, family dos, anything - gets swept aside and cancelled, because

solution

seems obvious. In fact, the words 'at the same time' spell out the answer. But

there's this voice inside my head screaming, 'I HAVEN'T STARTED WRITING!' I

it

wasn't that clear when it was all in a state of flux -- where everything is up for grabs

wake up, shower, have a coffee, watch telly, go to town, buy some food, potter about,

and

nothing is definite. It wasn't so much a question of how does the TARDIS get to

buy a magazine, come home, e-mail, make phone calls, watch more telly, and it goes

the

end of the universe; it was more one of should it? Why? Is that rubbish? Does it

on and on and on until I go to bed again, and a whole day has gone. It's just vanished.

need

to be connected to Jack? And these doubts were underscored by much bigger

Every single minute of the day, every single sodding minute, is labelled with this

ones:

is it right to bring back Captain Jack in Series Three? Will he work with David's depressing, lifeless, dull thought: I'm not writing. I make the time vanish. I don't know

Doctor?

What does Martha do? Have I really got to set this in a lame quarry? How why I do this. I even set myself little targets. At 10am, I think, I'll start at noon. At

late

am I going to be with 3.12/3.13 if Utopia is already so late? Does the Master work noon, I think, I'll make it 4pm. At 4pm, I think, too late now, I'll wait for tonight

in

this day and age? Can we delay production because I'm so late? Every question was and work till late. And then I'll use TV programmes as crutches -- ooh, must watch

jostling

for space.

this, must watch that - and then it's 10pm and I think, well, start at midnight, that's a

Eventual

the script was so late that I had to start work. Two pages in - two bloody

good time. A good time?! A nice round number! At midnight, I despair and reckon it's

pages

- it just clicked: Captain Jack arrives, therefore the TARDIS goes to the end of

too late, and stay up despairing. I'll stay that way till 2 or 3am, and then go to bed in

the

universe. That sounds so simple now, but it was the key to the whole episode. You'd

a tight knot of frustration. The next day, the same thing. Weeks can pass like that. I'm

think

I'd learn from that example. You'd think that would tell me: start writing and

wondering if describing it to you might break the cycle. Probably not.

it

will begin to make sense. But I never learn. Next script, I'll go through the same

I've got this Torchwood script to write. Although it's a vague mess in my head, I know

process

all over again. To make it worse, my career is as successful as it can possibly be, exactly, very exactly, the first five pages. You'd think, to make my life easier, I'd type out

and
I'm probably writing scripts to the height of my ability at the moment, so I can those five pages at least. I could open a file now, right now, and bash them out in about

only
conclude that I've lumbered myself with a painful system that works. Is that it? Is three hours. I'd wake up tomorrow morning so much happier, because a file labelled

it
like a superstition that I have to panic in order to write well? It drives me mad.

'Torchwood 2.1' would exist. But no, I spend all day thinking, start, start, start. But I

When
I'm out and about and with people, at a production meeting or just bumping don't. It's gone 2am now, and I still haven't started. I go to bed in a state of despair, and

into
someone and saying hello, I know I'm a funny guy -- and I think that's deliberate.

wake up the same way. Literally, my very first thought when I wake up is a rush of fear

I
am consciously having a laugh, because it's an escape, it's a relief from the cloud and, well, I suppose self-hatred for being so stupid and slow. It's a lousy way to write.

bearing
down. Truth is, this e-mail isn't scratching the surface. It's worse than I'm

Or not write. It wrecks my life. I see my sisters about twice a year, my dad about three

describing
I'm not revelling in it; I'm sitting here thinking what a stupid idiot I am, times, my best friend Tracy about five times, I might see you socially -- what? -- twice

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and what a better life I could have, what a good, successful, happy life, and it's all my the Vorlax, and the alien planet. I think it's crap. It's very Primeval. Too Primeval. I own fault. What the hell do my family and friends really think of me? I did begin to like Primeval, but I don't want to copy it. Now, lodged in my head, is a simple image of a slight warning bells at the last Radio Times Cover Parry, by the sheer number of of how funny it is that Donna is actively looking for the Doctor, that in, say, a new people - about eight separate people, five of whom I hardly knew - who came up to plot there's something going on in an office block (boring setting, but bear with me), me with an opening gambit of 'Are you all right?' I thought, bloody hell, do I look something alien, so Donna is investigating, partly in the hope that she'll meet the like a corpse?! But I didn't really, which made me think: how am I spoken of? Like a Doctor, and partly because that's what people who have met the Doctor do. They lunatic? Well, you did ask. carry on the good work. And the Doctor is investigating too, but separately. This is the

crucial image: you play a good 15 minutes at the top of the episode with the Doctor FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 3 APRIL 2007 11:42:18 GMT and Donna not meeting. She walks out of one door, he walks in another, neither RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE... knowing that the

other is there. It's got all the fun that the housing estate idea didn't recognise - as I think most people would, especially writers - aspects of my own have. And doors! That's why I'm saying an office block - because it needs doors. And behaviour in what you describe in that e-mail. But would you call it writer's block? lifts. Donna gets in the left-hand lift, doors close, the right-hand lift opens, the Doctor It doesn't sound entirely like writer's block, it's more self-imposed than that, and you steps out. This story isn't a farce, but it uses the shapes of a farce. That's the starting don't use that term, but I'm interested in how - or whether - you would define writer's point, the inspiration, the heart of it. Of course, it leaves me with no story and no

enemy, but there we go. Back to square one. Except - block? Some people say that it's a fallacy...

Imagine a moment when the villain is unveiling, unmasking in some swanky office FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 3 APRIL 2007 22:11:42 GMT

at night, and Donna has been investigating, and so has the Doctor, separately, but

with
both working out that something crucial is happening in this office. The Doctor**RE:**
AND NOW ON BBC ONE...

I couldn't help thinking that you might read that e-mail and think, sod off, you
self- has lowered himself down on a window-cleaner's cradle to look into the
room (I'm

indulgent tosspot. It's all so me, me, me that I forget, everyone must feel like
that. determined to get that cradle back in, the one that was cut from Smith
and Jones),

and
Donna is inside the building, outside the office, looking through a glass window.

You're right. Well, not everyone. I read an interview with Jeanette Winterson
once, in

At
the moment of the Big Reveal, where the Sinister Boss is revealing himself as a
which she spoke about writing with such certainty that she made the process
sound so

monster,
what's really happening is: the Doctor and Donna are looking across the
wonderful, clear, pure, confident. It was so beautiful that I cut it out and kept it
by my

room
and seeing each other on the other side! Her reaction! His reaction! Upstaging
computer. It's now been swept away somewhere. That was stupid. But I
remember that

the
monster! That makes me laugh, and that's good. It feels more like Doctor Who than
she described writing as being like flying. That must be nice. Feels more like
falling

anything
else I've thought up. It's in character for both the Doctor and Donna. The
to me.

fun
of these scenes feels stronger than anything.

I never call it writer's block, though. I don't know why, but I sort of react with
revulsion to that phrase. I imagine it to mean sitting there with No Ideas At All.
For

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 11 APRIL 2007 23:48:42 GMT

me, it feels more like the ideas just won't take the right shape or form. Do

writers ever

TAKING

THE FIFTH?

run out of ideas? Doesn't the block say that something else is wrong? Something bigger?

Lordy,

what a night! Jane Tranter came to Cardiff this afternoon for a Sarah Jane

I don't know.

read-

through, but then she asked if she could come round my flat tonight, with Julie,

for 'a

chat', which they did. The chat was to formally convey from the Sixth Floor of

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 6 APRIL 2007 10:34:13 GMT

the

BBC that they want me to stay for a fifth series of Doctor Who. The three of us

RE: AND NOW ON BBC ONE...

have

talked about this before, loads of times, but Jane felt that she'd never really been

There has been a lot of good, practical work over the past few days - not Maybe

official'

about it. I still said no. It's not about the money, and Jane and Julie both

thinking, but actual sitting in meetings with writers and sorting out plots. A lot of

know

that. They knew my reply even before they'd walked in, and agreed with me, but

Torchwood and Sarah Jane, and a great meeting with Gareth about the Agatha Christie

professionally

they had to come and represent the formal BBC point of view.

episode. I adore those meetings. I'm in my element.

That's

today's news. Hey ho. Turning down a fifth series. The thing is, Ben... a fifth

But in the 4.1 Maybe... I've found that I vividly and profoundly hate the estate,

series'.

Did you ever, ever, ever think that Doctor Who would be this important to the

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWO: CATHERINE, KYLIE, AND DENNIS

BBC? That's the maddest thing of all, and the best thing of all. I've been browsing Outpost Gallifrey to read how crap I am.⁷ I've been watching some

of
Series Three - not for work, but with a state of mind that says, deliberately, this isn't
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 12 APRIL 2007 02:40:08 GMT
as good as I thought it was. In fact, it's crap. I've failed. I'm rubbish. I'm lucky. I'm aRE: TAKING THE FIFTH? fraud. I've lost it, and this next script is the script that will expose that. Etc. I am, I tell 'em that you'll stay on for three million quid and Freddie Ljungberg on a serving realise, making myself miserable. That's the old dark streak of You Don't Deserve This dish! Go on, just for a laugh. See what they say. You're probably right to decline, but were ticking away, like I punish myself for being successful. Plots and stories in the Maybeyond tempted? Just a little bit tempted? A teensy bit tempted? Not because of Freddie on are taking a back seat. Instead, I'm focusing on the schedule, because that's already a plate (was that even in the offing? It's late and I'm confused), but just because the BBC a nightmare. My mind is going 'April, May, June' all the time, because those three really does seem to want you to stay? That must be flattering, at least. months are going to require a script a month, and I never manage to complete a script

a
month. Why-oh-why can't I be happy? Why can't I just love this work? Why can't
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 12 APRIL 2007 03:19:05 GMT
feel like Jeanette Winterson in that quote I lost, where writing feels like flying? It's notRE: TAKING THE FIFTH? even falling at the moment; it's sinking. Why do I get like this? Tempted? To do a fifth series? Not for a second. Weird, isn't it? I'm going to go to bed In the real world... yesterday, we said no to Dennis Hopper. He was available for and think that through, and wonder why that is exactly. I'm not sure. I think, really, only four days. I was weak and promised to make it work, then came home and it's because the option is untenable, because way back, around the time that we filmed realised that I'd lumbered myself with a cameo that doesn't fit 4.X at all. I wouldn't be *Doomsday, we promised this course of action to David. And to each other.* able to do anything proper with that character because of the limitations. That's where

We decided that we'd have a fourth series (David's third), with a big ending,

after Phil is marvellous. He knows me so well. He phoned on Thursday night and said, which we'd take the show off air, just for a short while, apart from the odd Special, 'Between you and me, I'm worried about the pressure that this is putting you under. so that we could have a breather, and a new production team could settle in, find its Should we withdraw?' He was voicing my every worry. So we nixed that. Good. Whatfeet, and prepare for Series Five. And there's all sorts of other plans, for the future, does Dennis Hopper mean to an eight-year-old anyway? but... I'm almost superstitious about putting things into print. Julie, Phil, Jane and I It's weird, not knowing if Gridlock is on tonight. I'm quite excited. committed to that initial promise, and we're sticking to our word. That promise means

that the fifth series option does not exist for me. They might as well talk about buying
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 14 APRIL 2007 21:51:18 GMT

me Freddie Ljungberg. It's flattering and all that, but it ain't gonna happen.
RE: TAKING THE FIFTH?

Three
cheers for the football not overrunning! It was exciting, wasn't it, waiting to see

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 14 APRIL 2 007 16:20:20 GMT
whether Doctor Who would be on tonight or not? I wonder what effect the football and

RE: TAKING THE
FIFTH? 7.40pm start
had on the ratings. Well, we'll find out tomorrow.

The past few days have been so busy. I know that thinking of stories is a constant »That's the old dark streak of You Don't Deserve This ticking away, like I punish

background beat, but sometimes the sheer volume of work can do a pretty good job at myself for being successful.«

drowning it out. It's like the work triples when we're not filming. February and March You make it sound conscious. Not like, 'Right, I'll piss myself off now,' but like the

are sort of my months off from writing, but now it's heading towards Writing Time misery comes first, and then goes in search of stuff that'll encourage it. Is depression

for the rest of the year. This week, I've been feeling myself sort of withdraw. I'm alone too strong a word? Self-induced or otherwise, depression is an affliction with a roll call

in Cardiff this weekend and next week - very few meetings, just me, locked away. I'm of writers, poets, musicians and so on. Edgar Allan Poe wondered:

becoming bad at replying to e-mails (I've been telling you less stuff, and I'm making an *whether all that is profound, does not spring from disease of thought, from moods of*

effort to write, though I do still want to), phone calls and messages are going ignored... mind exalted at the expense of the general intellect. They who dream by day are

and I want to be like that. I want everyone and everything to sod off. *cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night. I love that. It's*

That Series Five offer didn't help, in a weird way. The next day, I started smoking again from his short story 'Eleonora', which is thought to be semi-

(I've been off them for a while), eating really bad food, just sort of guzzling rubbish.

7
Outpost Gallifrey was 3 fan-run Doctor Who website and discussion forum with over 40.000 registered members, which spawned the Doctor Who Forum.

8
Had 14 April's FA Cup Semi-Final between Manchester United and Watford gone into extra time, Gridlock would have been postponed for a week.

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autobiographical. Do you reckon this fear that your scripts won't be good enough recent interview with a 'suffering artist', and it inspired me. It was for the Fast Trackactually makes them better, ultimately? Does it vanquish complacency? Or would your people at the Edinburgh TV Festival, the eager ones who really want to get into telly,work be better, do you think, if you didn't harbour such glaring doubts? all about 18, 19, 20 years old. I challenged them to admit that they feel, at their age,

that they haven't lived, that they don't know enough about the world to write about it.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 15 APRIL 2007 14:30:35 GMT Gradually, reluctantly, lots of nodding heads. And then I played them two clips: oneRE: **TAKING THE FIFTH?** from an episode of Buffy the Vampire Slayer (Out of Mind, Out of Sight), where a girlThat's a great quote. But more important than even Edgar Allan Poe: we got EIGHT has been so ignored that she becomes invisible, and another from I, Claudius, whereMILLION VIEWERS last night! This is a strange and lovely time. That's cheered me young Claudius is being so ignored that he might as well be invisible. I pointed outup. Talking of which... that both those scenes are the same thing. One popular culture, one high art, but the

The depression thing. I fight shy of the word depression, because real depression is same drama. More importantly, who hasn't felt like that? Especially at 18, 19, 20, youso debilitating and awful that I feel a bit arrogant even to assume that I've touched probably feel more ignored and left out than at any other time in your life. Of courseupon it. Although I go into awful slumps, I do deliver scripts in the end, and I stay on you've lived. That's you! Which means that you can write 7, Claudius, and you can writetop of work, just about, and I don't think Depression with a capital D has any such *Buffy the Vampire Slayer. There's no limit to what you can write. I swear, it was like youluxury.* And yet... and yet... I'm well aware of those depression/creativity theories, and could see light bulbs switching on over their heads. I was quite proud of that.certainly I've watched it at work in other writers. Paul Abbott is genuinely bipolar, and *Queer as Folk was ten years of my life put on screen. Just about everything in that*that's a frightening and sometimes brilliant thing to behold. I'm nowhere near that. I happened to me in some shape or form. Except having the baby, and he hardly features!even envy it, that's the killer. Suffering can seem so admirable and important. There But the best thing I ever did was write Bob & Rose next, which had never happenedis a widespread theory, propagated by the media and hugely by writers themselves, to me, ever, in any way. I've never even slept with a woman. Not once. Well, a bit ofthat writing and suffering are synonymous. With Jimmy McGovern, that seems to rubbing with Beverley Jacobs when I was 15, but that's only because she used to go outbe a genuine, heartfelt philosophy -- if you haven't suffered, you can't write. But that with a boy I fancied, and still fancy to this day, so I had my eyes closed,

imagining him. philosophy actually excludes certain people from the right to write, and that has to be Poor Beverly. Of course, in writing Bob & Rose, I did go through a long process of wrong. That's a step away from book-burning. You can't have a list of who's entitled to imagining the women in my life that I do love, the ones that maybe I'd be with if I were to write and who isn't. straight, and how I'd feel. A lot of that was based on my friend Tracy. When Julie met

When I was starting out, I felt that tyranny. You Must Suffer! It didn't help that Tracy a few years ago, she said, 'My God, she's Rose Cooper! She talks like her!' You

one of the first writers I knew well was Paul, because the history of his childhood is see, it all comes from somewhere. Every time you think, no, I haven't experienced that

so genuinely awful. It looms over his reputation like a monolith, and threatens to emotion, YES, YOU HAVE! In tiny ways. But that's all you need. You imagine and

become the template for others. In the early 1990s, I used to think I'd never reach extrapolate from that. Most writers aren't murderers, but an awful lot of them write

his level, because I haven't suffered. That's why Queer as Folk was such a breakthrough murders. Who hasn't wanted to murder someone? That's what they're tapping into, just

for me. It took me that long to realise that I had experience of a whole world that no that spark. But you certainly don't need to be steeped in blood to write it well.

one else was writing. I'm not equating gay with suffering there; I just mean experience. You asked if the fear makes the scripts better. Well, I have no choice but to think that

Everyone has fallen in love. Everyone has been bullied. Everyone has lost someone, it helps, or it would be unbearable. To write without that fear is not an option -- not

somehow. Everyone has been ecstatic. Everyone has been suicidal, even if only slightly. yet, not for me -- so I have to rationalise it, hope that it helps, or I'd go nuts. I can't

That 'slightly' is the important thing. You don't need to have had your head shoved imagine writing and thinking, this is easy. I'm marvelling at those words. This. Is. Easy.

in the dirt; you only need to be able to imagine it. 'A moment's imagination is equal They're impossible. I might as well say, 'I'm a Martian.'

to a lifetime of experience.' I read that somewhere once, and it's so true. If those sorts There I go again, saying that you don't have to suffer, while admitting that the of doubts - I'm not important, I haven't suffered, I'm too young/happy/middle-

class process is an act of suffering. Still. No one said that this had to be logical.

Right.

I've got to write a synopsis of 4.X for Kylie Minogue's agent. I never write
to be experienced - are ever holding you back from writing, DON'T LISTEN TO

treatments,

but I have to this time, because they want to know what they're getting
THEM! It really is a tyranny, and it's bollocks.

into.

Once again, I think the word is 'busk'...

I often get asked to give masterclasses in scriptwriting. I usually turn them down, but
once, just once, I gave a great one. If I say so myself! I think I was angry about some

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CHAPTER THREE

BASTARDS

In which The People's Quiz is shunted,
the internet is slated, and one beautiful day
with Wynn timer la Freak makes everything
worthwhile



FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2007 01:48:30 GMT

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Here you go, Keeper of the Matrix. Not a bad read. I
hate treatments, but they do
make me concentrate. I'm going to bed now, terrified
about the budget. How the hell
are we going to afford this?

DOCTOR WHO CHRISTMAS SPECIAL 2007 STARSHIP TITANIC

The Starship Titanic sails above the Earth on its Christmas Cruise. Half
original Titanic, half floating hotel, it's a luxury spaceship with holidaymakers
on board, all decked out for the festive season.

The Doctor comes on board as a curious visitor, and soon makes friends with one of the ship's staff, Peth, a waitress. While everyone wines and dines around her, Peth has to clean up after them. But she's dreaming of a better life. And the Doctor is travelling alone for once - the lonely Time Lord. As he strikes up a friendship with Peth, liking her feistiness, her sense of humour, he wonders... could she join him on his travels in Time and Space, as his new companion...?

Disaster strikes! Meteorites hit the Titanic - and it's more like The Poseidon

@yuliasha

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
THREE: BASTARDS

Adventure In Space, as the ship is crippled, with oxygen running out.
Worse, The more you do know, the more involved you are, the better the product gets. But

if the Doctor can't get to the Flight Deck in time, the ship might fall onto the getting that production experience in the first place is hard. I was a producer before I

Earth below, with its nuclear engines threatening to explode... was a full-time writer, so I knew all that stuff first. To have a rough understanding of

The Doctor joins with Peth to lead a small, brave band of survivors through the costs - and, more importantly, the practicalities - has to help.

the wreckage - and in true disaster movie tradition, they're picked off, one A lot of budget stuff is common sense. Write an army of 5,000, and it's going to

by one. But the Doctor soon realises that the meteorites weren't an accident: cost. Write a great script set in one kitchen, and producers will love you for ever. Doctor

a saboteur is on board who wants them all dead. But why? What secrets are *Who is expensive to make, but that's because of our ambition. We could have aimed*

certain passengers keeping? And the saboteur hasn't finished yet: the ship's lower. Thankfully, we didn't. But we never relax and throw money around. We're so

robot staff- frightening, blank-faced, golden Christmas Angels - have been trusted. I like to think we respect that trust. That's why I went to bed shivering with

reprogrammed to hunt down the living. fear the other night. I was genuinely scared by that 4.X synopsis, and felt a massive

It's a race against time, as the Doctor and Peth battle through the ruins responsibility for it. I told Julie, 'I'm deeply worried that my imagination is flying into

big-bucks movie territory. If I should pull back, now is the time to say so.' That's a bit of the devastated ship, fighting flying Angels and the ticking clock, to save

disingenuous

I suspected that by offering Julie the chance to cut down, she'd respond both the Titanic and the planet below. But as the Doctor and Peth are thrown by moving Heaven and Earth to get the money that we need so that I wouldn't be together, can they truly trust each other...?

compromised

It's all politics. I'm not daft. But neither is she. Julie knows me too well.

The Doctor Who Christmas Special for BBC One is a fun, scary, full- If she did say to pull back, I'd know that she meant it, that she'd reached her limits.

blooded 60-minute drama, complete with monsters, thrills, chases and Getting out before Series Five is so wise. It'll leave the show at the height of

production

so that the next, future version cannot come back cheaper. Honestly, that's terrible deaths, as the Time Lord and his friends battle against the odds to part of the strategy.

save the day. And they succeed -just in time for Christmas!

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 22 APRIL 2007 01:09:17 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO; RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2007 16:45:14 GMT

RE:

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

I

keep worrying about 4.1. What the hell is Donna doing? Investigating? What is

It's a sci-fi-murder-mystery-Christmas-disaster-movie-epic! With echoes of The

this

high-rise office block? Beauty? Plastic surgery? Cosmetic surgery? The ultimate

Poseidon Adventure, The Robots of Death, and Kylie's 2001 On a Night Like This tour!

industrial

beauty parlour? Big business, with aliens? In the car on the way up to

What more could you ask for at Christmas? Good busk. I think it should end on

a

Manchester

(I'm back up north now), I spent a lot of time thinking about Botox. I
song, though.

mean

Botox as in an alien spore that bursts out and transforms you. We've never done

Do you need to appreciate the costs involved in making television drama in
order to

that

creepy green transformation thing -- humans turning horribly into aliens. If those
write it? Or can understanding the expense inhibit
invention? humans are 40-something-year-old women
who've been Botoxed to the hilt, so much

the

better. Imagine a scene in a wine bar where they transform, then lurch out into the

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 18 APRIL
2007 22:03:50 GMT

street.

Deadly Ladies Who Lunch! Not camp at all. It's sort of obvious and fun, which

RE:

CHRISTMAS

IS

COMING

is good for a
series opener. I'm amazed that we haven't done it before. I think, in my

Did you imagine that there wouldn't be a song? The Poseidon Adventure won an
Oscar mind, all that 'beauty' stuff had become the sole province of
Cassandra, but actually

for Best Song for 'The Morning After'. ' There's got to be a morning after I If we
can hold there's so much more that you can do with it.2

on through the night! I often sing it at 3am when I'm only on Page 22.

Yes, knowing the cost of television could inhibit invention, but I think writing
is a FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 22 APRIL
2007 22:08:45 GMT

stronger impulse than that; it overrides such plain little worries. Understanding
budget **RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING**

isn't strictly necessary for a writer. You're there for the ideas; the production
team is With the investigation of a high-rise city office at night, and the Doctor
and companion-

there for the making-of. At the same time, the writer-as-producer model is
wonderful.

'Last human' Cassandra, who debuted in Doctor Who 1.2, underwent over 700 plastic surgery operations until she was

1 The Robots of Death is a Doctor Who serial first broadcast in 1977. nothing but a piece of skin stretched onto a metal frame, with eyes and a mouth, connected to a brain in ajar.

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THREE: BASTARDS DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

out
of this? Nothing. Just misery. So sod it, I'm off.to-be criss-crossing but taking time to meet,
4.1 is reverting to the template of that

That
was severe. First time I've ever done that. As a result, I'm quite cheery again.opening episode
that you'd planned, all those years ago, were the call ever to come

Nightmare
welcome-back-to-Cardiff dinner with the Torchwood cast tonight, justasking you to revive
Doctor Who. The one with the escape-by-window-cleaner's-cradle

when
I feel I've abandoned them. (I haven't. I'll try to script-edit more.) Eve Myles gotsequence, and
the grandad who plays in a skiffle band. You've come full circle.

drunk,
which was lively. Gareth David-Lloyd is just the sexiest bastard on this Earth.

Anyway, I see the News of the World is reporting that Kylie has been cast in this year's

And
Johnny Barrowman regaled us with stories of how many Josephs he'd like to sleep

Christmas Special... as a Cyberwoman! A show spokesman has said: 'Russell is just

with,
so it was a bit of a laugh.3 The panic has abated. Now I'll have to wait for the
putting the finishing touches to the episode and it will be TV dynamite.' Well, he's

4.X
panic...*half right*.

The
other thing is, when I do get in that pits-of-darkness mood, it's not quite true

that I
lock myself away; I can use a bad mood. I can use it to say things that I wouldn'tFROM: RUSSELL
T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 25 APRIL 2007 22:37:42 GMT

otherwise.
There's always a game being played, somewhere, somehow, isn't there? So**RE: CHRISTMAS
IS COMING**

I used that
depression to make it very clear that shifting the Doctor Who timeslotI've been silent, I know.
I've been glum. Bloody glum. Script glum. It occurred to me every week, as has
happened this year, is bloody stupid. Squandering, that was the- because this was Torchwood
script glum, not Doctor Who glum yet -- that it's going word I used. Good word. So
then Julie and Phil told Peter Fincham, using their ownto be hard to write to you when I'm
glum. I'm not saying that I don't want to; it's just glumness too - and it worked! He's
shifted The National Lottery People's Quiz, and wethat I'm really going to have to try hard.
For one thing, it feels so indulgent. You can't should go back to 7pm from Episode 6

onwards. The BBC is changing the format of that voice in the back of your head saying, 'Miserable? A writer? There are people a primetime Saturday-night quiz show just for us. What's more, suddenly, yes, maybe out there desperately ill, in despair, in genuine, proper, medical Depression - and you the Doctor Who budget can allow us to go abroad for the Pompeii episode. (For all dare to be miserable over a deadline? You actually want some of that?' Equally, when of two days, but hey!) And what's this? Extra FX money for 4.12/4.13. The BBC has I'm in the middle of that worry, I reckon I could wrestle any of those bleeding hearts jumped through hoops to make me happy. That's how it works -- and I know it. to the floor and beat them in the unhappiness stakes. Also, there's a fear, a natural

fear, of appearing to be an idiot. I don't want to appear to be an idiot to you. And that FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 26 APRIL 2007 00:33:23 GMT multiplies because I'm a gay man, and you're handsome and young, so I want to look **RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING** good anyway. Of course I do. But the fact that this correspondence is scary is a good I'm glad you're okay. You hadn't replied for a few days. I was a bit worried. Not worried reason to keep going. Always do what scares you. I'm not flagging this as a call to halt; about the correspondence (that's like a cockroach: it'd survive nuclear fallout), but I'm just trying to explain what I'm thinking. worried that you'd thrown yourself into the Bay. I'm glad you haven't. Nonetheless,

On Saturday night/Sunday morning, I went to bed at 2am, lay awake, worrying never feel that you must write to me when you're in Script Hell. I'd always prefer that

-- no, panicking, to be honest -- and got up at 3am to work for an hour. And that wasn't you did, but I wouldn't want these e-mails to make a bad day ten times worse, forcing

typing work. I did anything rather than type. I trawled websites in search of stuff that you to write it all down, to explain yourself.

I could vaguely call research, stared at old scripts, and just sat there doing nothing. Having said that (!), can I ask, did you ever feel, even in your darkest moments, that

Getting up in the middle of the night? I have never done that before, which made me fixing Torchwood, that writing a 2.1 that would rejuvenate the concept, was actually

realise that this script-panic is something extraordinary. So I took action -- I pulled out beyond you? That you couldn't do it? Or was it a dawning realisation that you just

of that Torchwood script. I'm not doing it. didn't want to do it, and that you didn't really have to?

Poor Julie. She bears the brunt of all this and protects me from the consequences. »Now I'll have to wait for the 4.X panic«

It's easy for me in some ways, because with my status as a writer, frankly, I can get Of course, you could start writing 4.X now...?

away with anything. That's awful, isn't it? No one shouting, no one berating me, no »They've jumped through hoops to make me happy. That's how it works -- and I

contracts being waved, just everyone running around making that decision easy for know it.«

me. You could go power mad. Mind you, I'm mild and lovely compared to some of the And that makes you feel... how? Relieved? Disgusted? Humbled?

stuff you hear about other writers. Or maybe this is the start of me getting worse. The

truth is, I wasn't not-writing because I couldn't think of anything, but because I'm sick 3 Barrowman was, at the time, a judge on BBC One's *Any Dream Will Do*, a talent show that searched for a new lead to play

Joseph

in a West End revival of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

of fixing other people's problems. I sat there at 4am and thought: what am I getting

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
THREE: BASTARDS

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 26 APRIL 2007 00:57:16 GMT

RE: **CHRISTMAS** **IS**

COMING If I've learnt one thing, and I keep learning it, it's to be honest. That's seen me through I love that image of this correspondence surviving a nuclear war. The last remnant of my career. (But not sociopathically honest. There's no point walking into work and saying,

'Christ, Lynda, you're hideous!') If you don't say what you think, what's the bloody point? civilisation. 'It's... glowing!'

Nicola Shindler, who founded Red Production Company, always says that she and I »did you ever feel, even in your darkest moments, that fixing Torchwood, that

are successful because we know our own opinions, and we say those opinions out loud, writing a 2.1 that would rejuvenate the concept, was actually beyond you?«

immediately.4 But 99 per cent of TV folk are slow, unsure, don't speak up, or wait for

Not for a second. Beyond me? Absolutely not. I do feel kind of sad, because I love

someone else to speak up first. I remember my first meeting as a storyliner, on a Granada that cast and I love that show's potential, but really it was eating into Doctor Who

daytime soap called Families. I was young then, and terrified of this fabled job that I'd scripting time. The addition of The Sarah Jane Adventures to our schedules has just

always wanted to do, not having a clue what it actually entailed. I felt out of my depth. It made me run out of days.

wore a leather biker's jacket, just because I needed armour, I needed to look tough, because

»Of course, you could start writing 4.X now...?«

I was
so scared. The writers were devising the murder of a character, Don McLeod, and
Ha ha ha ha ha ha.

they'd
cooked up this ridiculous story where -- deep breath -- the man whose baby had
»And that makes you feel... how? Relieved? Disgusted? Humbled?«

been
kidnapped by the pub landlord's wife came into the pub, looking for revenge, and
I don't know. Does that make it more honest or less honest? When did I last do
started
a fight, and Don joined in, just because he was there, and he got punched and hit
something for one honest, pure reason, instead of calculating how I can use it?
Then

his
head on the table and died. He was killed by a complete stranger. Despite my fear,
I
again, Doctor Who benefits, so that's worth it.

could
not stop myself saying, 'No! If Don is going to be killed, it should be by someone
who
hates him, not some one-episode passer-by.' That sounds like such a small story,
but

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 26 APRIL 2007 11:57:09 GMT

it
was huge to me. It was a pivotal moment. I knew that I was in the right job.

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

Then
again, there are plenty of people who think I'm a bastard. Plenty. But I try not
Tell me, then -- a serious question -- do you have to be a bit of a bastard to
succeed in

to
work with them. I hope that's not me surrounding myself with yes-men. I can play
this industry? Some people say that you do. Let's face it, you can afford to be,
Russell,

the
nice guy, and of course I want the world to think I'm nice, but to be honest and
because you've achieved a certain status... but have you got where you are
today by

tough

is going to earn you enemies. Once, I remember, we had to sack a 12-year-old
being nice to the people around you? Similarly, everyone always says how nice
Julie is,

girl
from a children's show, because she wasn't good enough. I remember being amazed
but... but... I bet she can be a right monster when she needs to be.

that
people in the office were reeling, horrified, despairing, saying that we couldn't sack
a
kid... because I absolutely didn't care. It was for the good of the show. I insisted,
she

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 27 APRIL 2007 00:19:27 GMT

went,
and the programme got better. I lost no sleep at all over that. Not one second.

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING Seeing people's
horror was one of those chilling moments when I thought, everyone

It's gone midnight! It's my birthday! Do you know, once you're in your forties,
else
sees this differently - am I a bit odd? But it wasn't chilling enough to stop me.

you genuinely forget which birthday it is. I used to laugh at old folk and find
that

I'm
at the high end of the most expensive area of one of the most insecure, public,
impossible. And here I am. Anyway...

high-
flown, backstabbing industries in the UK, so I suppose it's kind of disingenuous

Bastards. (Now, that's a chapter title!) No, I don't think you have to be a
bastard.

to
say that I'm a nice man. And yet I think I am. (But I can't be.) I think about that a

Not at all. In fact, people who are bastards - real, genuine, complete bastards -
are few

lot,
not just prompted by your question. I do wonder. Julie, though... oh, Julie... now
and far between, and I've never seen them succeed in TV. They might burn for a
year

that's
really, truly, gobsmackingly pure niceness. One in a million.

or two, but it doesn't last. Like... hmm... one director, who's long since been reduced

to game shows. God, I hated him. And a producer -- bloody weird woman -- who

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 27 APRIL 2007 15:34:30 GMT

was put in charge of a very big show, swiftly got sacked, and has never been heard of

RE:

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

since. But of course there are thousands of people on a lower level of Bastardom - the

Happy

birthday, Russell! You share it with Darcey Bussell, Patrick Stump from Fall

pains-in-the-arses, the shouters, the hysterics -- and they do all right, because a lot of

the industry thinks that's an acceptable way to behave. But why are they bastards?

4 Red is a Manchester-based, independent production company, formed in 1998 by Shindler, a successful TV producer. Red's

first

production was *Queer as Folk*; later dramas include *Bob & Rose*, *The Second Coming*, *Mine Ait Mine* and *Casanova*.

Insecurity, weakness, over-promotion... well, I could just go back and repeat the word

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 THREE: BASTARDS

Out Boy, and Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, which means... I don't
 nice; their trust is a great pressure on me, to do well.know what it means. You're by far the tallest? But I can't stop wondering - am I a bastard? I haven't been able to shake off that

It's interesting what you say about being surrounded by yes-men. During their thought. After I activated those couple of anecdotes the other day about sackingsinterview for Doctor Who Magazine the other month, the one where their Doctor Who and things, it sort of opened a little door onto similar tales, and the list of peoplecolleagues posed the questions, I asked Julie and Phil your killer query: what is it that I've sacked - well, you don't often get to sack people, but the people I've replaced, orthey like least about your writing? But they wouldn't answer it. Even though they knew excluded, or had removed, or plainly cut off is, well, it's more than a few. Blimey! Lasthow much you wanted them to. That's the drawback, I suppose, of being at the top of night, I was on the phone to Julie, and I suggested a new Torchwood writer called Jamesyour game. Who's going to challenge you? Who can you rely on to be brutally honest Moran to write the Pompeii script, because he's fast and good and new enough to be

rewritten
 by me with no complaints. Julie said, 'Well, give me a few days to sort thatwith you? Who'll stop you from going too far? Anyone? No one? Doesn't that bug you,

out.'
 I said, 'Why? I could meet him tomorrow.' She said, Til have to talk to MarkRussell? (Look, I've sent you some killer questions of my own, on your birthday. Now

Gatiss.'
 'Why?' 'Because this script would replace his World War II one,' she said, 'andwho's a bastard?')

he's
 been working on that for over a year.' I went, 'Oh,' and I actually got annoyed withFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 28 APRIL 2007 16:10:47 GMT

Julie
 for worrying over something that I thought was trivial. Thing is, I didn't care.

And
 this isn't some stranger; this is Mark! Lovely Mark! Brilliant Mark! A gentleman,RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

and
 truly a gentle man. He's got one of the wittiest, wildest imaginations in this wholeJulie and Phil do still talk about that question. You're not forgotten, just unanswered,

bloody
 country. I like Mark tremendously, I think he's wonderful, but this is for thealthough Phil says, no, he can't think of anything. Julie gets the question, she knows

good

of the show.what you mean (or what /mean - it was my question!), and she's still thinking, I swear

to you. Maybe she's worried about saying something that would destabilise me, but I I reckon I've got some sort of cut-off point, beyond which I just don't care. In the don't think so. She knows me better than that, and she knows it would do me good. It course of my career, I've faced sacked actors, rewritten writers and banished directors.might be a long wait, but I think she'll get there in the end. While I sort of sympathise on a superficial level, it doesn't really touch me. Not at all.

I do worry about being surrounded by yes-men. You're right, it happens. But the God knows what they say about me behind my back! I know of one script editor, whomore able you are to surround yourself with people that you trust, the more likely it is I had booted off a show years ago, who still calls me the Devil incarnate. But he wasto happen. Not because you want yes-men, but because people that you trust, whose rubbish. So he was removed. Good. No matter how upset someone is, if it makes thejudgement is sound, tend to be people whose judgement is close to your own. That programme better, then tough. That's being a bastard, I suppose. Is the word 'ruthless'?becomes, naturally, a closed circle. I don't think it's happened to me yet. In the end, Except 'ruthless' implies a deliberate cutting-off of feelings, doesn't it? I just don't feeljust as good writers are hard to find, so are good script editors, good producers and them. I do not notice when I've hurt someone. I've spent more time worrying about itgood execs. When you find good people like Julie and Phil, their sheer talent cancels in these paragraphs than I do in everyday life.out the risk of them yes-ing. I suppose the danger is not RTD And The Yes-Men, but I've just remembered something. It was 1997, and I copped off with a bloke calleda triumvirate of people who are so similar that contrary opinions don't get enough of Toby. I'll spare you the details. Let's just say it was a great night. But he only had aa look-in. Then again, plenty of shows lack any sort of voice, so maybe our similarities single bed, because he was a student, and it was a bit uncomfortable, sleeping there,make for a strong show. and I'd tons of work to do... so I got up at 5am, got dressed, walked back home. A

But! The fact that Julie and Phil trust me is an equally great pressure. That can be couple of weeks later, a friend of mine said that this Toby was being all bitchy and worse than working for someone who thinks you're crap. Julie and Phil give every hour calling me stuff. That's a shame, I thought, he seemed really nice. About six years later

to this show, as do Ed Thomas, Louise Page, Jane Tranter, the gaffers, bloody everyone. - it took six years for this little thought to trickle down - I thought, hold on, I got up

That's what's pushing us into Pompeii, the thought of taking the show further, making at 5am after a really great night, got dressed, and just left. Not a word. Not a note. I

it better, trying something that's really, really difficult. I got a great e-mail from Ed the didn't leave my number. I just went. AND I WONDER WHY HE CALLED ME A

other day, full of the impossibilities and impracticalities of realising Ancient Rome, BASTARD!!! I didn't think what the whole thing looked like from his perspective, not

ending with the words, 'Let's do it!' That brilliant man. He's the best production for one second. I couldn't see what I'd done. Six years it took me to see that. I am blind.

designer in the business. The thought of them having to work like dogs on a script that I suppose we all do things like that, every day, but it does make me laugh, considering

isn't quite good enough is awful. That pushes and challenges me. I'm not just being my whole job is based on how people see things.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
THREE: BASTARDS

I just Googled that Toby... and there's nothing. Every name is on Google somewhere. psychology. Not in a psychology-degree sort of way, but in a plain, accurate, human, There can't be nothing. Did I make him up? Was I drugged?! down-to-earth sort of way. If your friend turns out to be having an affair, there's no

in standing around going, 'No! Never! I don't believe it! That can't be true!' TheFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 29 APRIL 2007 12:08:52 GMT writer stands there thinking, that's fascinating! And even, oh, of course! That's not toRE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING say that

a writer is all-forgiving or non-judgemental, but they're much more interested»Is the word 'ruthless'? Except 'ruthless' implies a deliberate cutting-off of feelings, in understanding it, I think. (They? Me? We? Pronoun crisis here! Caitlin's use of the doesn't it? I just don't feel them.« You. Would. Make. A. Good. Dalek. word 'artist' threw me -- too scary a word.) The danger is to assume a generosity behind

»I suppose we all do things like that, every day, but it does make me laugh, that, like, oh, the writer understands pain, wrongdoing, frailty, the-whole-of-bloody-considering my whole job is based on how people see things.« humanity, therefore the writer must be lovely. In fact, the process is as selfish as...

Logically, I suppose, artists should understand us better than anyone - better even well, as anything else anyone ever does. You might have great insight into your mate's than our families, our workmates, our closest friends. Artists are supposed to see us actions, but there's a lot of glee in that understanding, and self-satisfaction, even afor who we really are. But then art isn't rational, is it? Here is something that Caitlin feeling of superiority. Actually, are you more interested in your friend in that moment Moran once wrote in The Times. I liked it so much that I cut it out and kept it: of crisis than on an ordinary day when everything's fine?

By and large, there is a single reason why any artist gains an audience: he talks about us. He The solipsistic, uncaring bastard stands back, studying people and using them. Is

explains us to ourselves. While our friends, partners, children, bosses and colleagues will, as a that it? Is that what being a writer is?

rule of thumb, widely eschew embarking on penetrating analyses of our truest thoughts, or the

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 30 APRIL 2007 15:13:46 GMT

deepest workings of our hearts, artists wade in there and write whole albums, or fill entire an

galleries, or improvise 90 minutes of stand-up comedy about us, and what we're like, and what RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

we think. And this is why we, on many occasions, do things that show we love our artists more I tested the word 'Botox' on Phil earlier. He went, 'Ooh!' - so that's a good sign. I keep

than our loved ones. At least they notice us. At least they start conversations. thinking of those Ladies Who Lunch, lurching down the High Street, with their Botox I'm not sure I agree with Caitlin completely, but it does sound like the beginning of a lines erupting into green frond-ish stuff. Monsters in fake Chanel suits! And a strong, hard, theory that's heading somewhere interesting. What do you reckon, Russell? Do artists female villain, head of the Beauty Technique, played by someone like Amanda Redman. understand us better? If that's true, why do they, by and large, make just as almighty a I've spent a lot of time thinking about Pompeii, too. The Doctor and Donna hash of real life as the rest of us? arrive... but why do they leave the TARDIS if they know where they are? A quick bit

sightseeing, perhaps, and then they scarper back to the TARDIS - only to see it in

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 29 APRIL 2007 14:49:26 GMT

distance, on the back of a horse and cart! It's being taken into Pompeii, so they

to follow. If we can get exterior locations abroad, the Doctor and Donna have to

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

through the city in pursuit. The TARDIS will be taken to a villa - our studio-

I was at the Welsh BAFTAs last night. Torchwood beat Doctor Who as Best Drama! And

- and that's where I want a bit of Asterix. Roman families on TV are always

Graeme Harper won Best Director. Oh, it was lovely. He's 60 years old and that's the

around pontificating, but I want a nice, funny family, like the one in Asterix

first thing he's ever won in his whole hard-working life. Just to see him, all

smiling

the Laurel Wreath. A likeable, ineffectual dad, a hapless son, a strong wife, cheeky

and Sontaran-sized under the spotlight, holding a BAFTA mask, it was actually very

Plus, in the villa, to stop the Doctor just hopping into the TARDIS and leaving moving.

Household Gods! I love the idea of Household Gods, like the Romans used to have, Anyway, I love that Caitlin Moran quote. I'm not sure I agree with it either, but I

of the Hearth, God of the Atrium... what were they called? Lares? But we can love the way she wades in, never scared of showing her workings in the margin. God,

real 'gods' speaking, issuing forth in flames... which are, of course, the aliens she's clever. Though maybe she makes the whole process sound more generous and under the volcano. Fire People. (Why are they there?) Somehow, we've got to end up

beneficent by saying that an artist 'talks about us'. How kind. But maybe it's 'talks *inside the volcano, or under it. When it goes off, the Doctor and Donna have to be*

about himself. He just does it so well that everyone recognises it. hiding in a capsule of some sort - maybe a big white ceramic bubble, big enough for

Then again, good writing is basically a good understanding of people. Never mind

(we might need Sontaran globe-ships later on, so it could double-up) - so they're structure and character and that; just have a good, fundamental understanding of

blasted out of the volcano, in the bubble, like a cork from a bottle. That makes

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
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me laugh. Christ, the CGI costs...! slave, because I hate it when he comes in and takes control and reduces the Daleks to

Oh, soothsayer! I thought of that this morning. You can't go to Roman times without soldiers. You could even feel sorry for him.a soothsayer. And what if the soothsayer is right? (And how?) That brings me to the Have I told you this next bit already? I've put the Doctor's bubbling hand on boardcru of this episode, the interesting new slant: if the Doctor goes to Pompeii and the TARDIS so that when David regenerates, one day, he'll grow another self and sendhe knows what's going to happen, why doesn't he help? He saves the world, so why it off into the parallel universe, so Rose has a Doctor of her own.6 Ahh! But then todaynot this one? What makes history established? Lord knows, there's never been a good I thought, why delay? His duplicate will now do this at the end of 4.13, which will beanswer to this in the history of the programme, but we could think of some fascinating gorgeous, and close off the Rose story for ever. That way, the Specials in 2009 will reallydialogue - and it's a great attitude for Donna, marks her out as a new companion. be special - no companions, almost no back-references at all. Nice and clean. NeverNone of the others has asked this essential stuff. The sadness of the end, as they have delay gratification if you can have it now. As I said to Freddie Ljungberg last night.to leave everyone to die! (Everyone? There isn't exactly a list of the dead at Pompeii, so

surely the Doctor can nudge someone to safety?)
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES,
TUESDAY 1 MAY 2007 00:40:40 GMT

Also, I keep thinking about 4.12/4.13. That's why, when I get to the end of a series, RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMINGI can - fingers crossed - write them quickly, because I've had so long to think about I saw a book in Waterstone's today called How I Write: The Secret Lives of Authors. Itthem. I wrote 3.13 in four days. Four days! Saturday night to Tuesday night. Four days looked interesting enough, but had hardly any text in it. It wouldn't survive a nuclearof hell, but all the same...! I'm thinking about Donna, Martha, Rose, Jack, Sarah Jane war! Is the world ready for The Secret Life of Russell T Davies, do you think?and Mickey as a team, and the tagline: 'ONE OF THEM WILL DIE!' I'd watch that!

Trouble is, I don't want to kill any of them. Rose Tyler was never created to die. None FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 1 MAY 2007 01:36:14 GMTof them was. They were all created to show off Doctor Who's central premise: the world RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMINGand the universe is wonderful, ordinary people can do great things, and the human race I've heard about that Secret Lives book. It seems a bit intimidating. There was ansurvives. At a cost, yes, but a cost to the supporting characters. I mean, really, imagine excerpt in The Guardian the other day. Apparently, Alan Hollinghurst has 'a largeMartha's death. Or Donna's. Or even Jackie's. It's just wrong. Tonally, wrong. Piranesi engraving of the ruins of the Baths of Diocletian in Rome' by

his desk, while

Maybe Mickey could die? 'Noooo!' said Phil. But Mickey is the only one who seems Jay McInerney has 'an Acheulian hand axe, crafted by Homo erectus half a million

killable, because he's not quite central, he's unlucky, he's the odd one out. It's inbuilt years ago'. Christ Almighty! I've got a Cassandra action figure on my desk. Still, that's

in Mickey's character. But then I get shivers, because it's always the black guy who novelists for you.

cops it. Maybe that's politically correct of me, but political correctness can be political

Did

I ever tell you that Zadie Smith once wrote to me to say that Bob & Rose is her

and correct. But how do I keep that tagline without delivering? Maybe one of them

favourite

drama ever, and she watches an episode once a week -- and this was years

dies and Martha is on hand with a bit of CPR... ? The repercussions of death are so

after

its transmission - in the hope that she'll create a character as real as Rose one day?

complicated and wonderful to write, but really 4.12/4.13 is about fighting Daleks,

Zadie

Smith!!!

not mourning. 4.13 has to have the happiest ending ever. I'm bringing them all back

Anyway.

I caused havoc on Torchwood last night. In 2.6, Ianto is killed, gets revived

because I want to see six people standing around that six-sided TARDIS console, flying

in

2.7 as the Living Dead - pale, but still sexy - and that strand runs throughout the

the Earth back home. It's happy. You can't mess with that. Then again, I'm perverse and

rest

of the series. Last night, I suddenly realised, wrong character. It should be Owen.7

more than capable of ignoring everything I've just said.

Seven

scripts are now being rewritten, including scenes that are actually being filmed

I've a great image of Sarah Jane surrounded by Daleks, all shouting 'Exterminate!'

today!

Lines handed to the cast on the spot. Someone said, 'We can't do it. It's too late.'

That would be thrilling! (Yes, it's fannish, but I reckon I'm allowed to be in my last

said, 'I'd make you do this at your mother's deathbed on Christmas Day if it makes proper episode.) And then Mickey dimension-jumps in, blasts them with his big gun,

the

show better.' And it does. See, power mad! Still, it meant I had a meeting with and says, 'No one kills a Smith!' Ha ha ha. Also, this thought blazed into my head the

Gareth

David-Lloyd to explain it all. Christ, he's hot.

other day, as I was walking past Techniquet on the way to Tesco: DAVROS WOULD

I'm

talking about sex a lot. That means I'll start writing soon.

RECOGNISE SARAH JANE!5 How exciting! And Davros should be the Daleks'

6 The

Doctor's hand was cut off in 2.X, though he grew another. The original, severed hand, kept in a bubbling jar, appeared in

Torchwood

*Series One, the final three episode of Doctor Who Series Three, and remains in the TARDIS throughout Series Four.*5 Davros and

Sarah Jane Smith both featured in 1975 Doctor Who serial Genesis of the Daleks. 7 Medical man Owen Harper (played by Burn Gorman) appears throughout Torchwood Series One and Two.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
THREE: BASTARDS

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 2 MAY 2007 10:10:51
GMT Best. Day. Ever. RE: CHRISTMAS IS

COMING

it was transmitted six months later, my mum was dying, and that episode wasI couldn't sleep last night, so I sat in bed and watched Bob & Rose on DVD. I've been the last thing of mine she ever saw. I loved that bit with the mothers,' she said on themeaning to for absolutely ages, but never have. That's terrible, isn't it? But I thought phone - and that was the last proper conversation we ever had, because she becameI'd find out why Zadie Smith loves it with a passion that borders on insanity. I started insensible after that. The next Monday night, I was pacing up and down in a hospitalwatching at 4am, just one episode. Well, I still haven't slept! I ended up watching all corridor, just waiting for her to die (the hospital that the Judoon invaded, many yearssix in succession. The whole lot. I cried when Penelope Wilton made that speech at later - how mad is that?), and there in the background was Episode 5 playing out inthe end of Episode 4 and handcuffed herself to a bus. And then I rewound, re-watched the patients' lounge, and it just seemed so hugely unimportant. That soured Bob &that bit, and cried again. I'm going to get some sleep now. Slightly embarrassed.
Rose for me for a long time. But do you know what? Not any more.

was shown at a gay festival thing in LA once, and I held this symposium onFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. WEDNESDAY 2 MAY 2007 17:01:41

GMT scriptwriting afterwards. Some lovely young writer stood up and asked, 'Why did thatRE: CHRISTMAS IS
COMING

make me cry so much? I described it to my boyfriend afterwards, and I startedThat e-mail means the world to me. Thank you. That scene in Episode 4 is extraordinary, crying all over again - and I don't know why!' We talked about that for a long time. Youisn't it? I'm going to tell you about that scene. One Sunday, many years ago, I went could pontificate with 57 theories, but I'm still not sure why. I don't know if I want toto a Stonewall Section 28 rally in that same Manchester square. Poor turnout. Bad know. Other than the simple fact that, in that moment, Monica Gossage is right.speeches. But then a glorious drag queen called Wynnie la Freak decided to take action Of course, that poor old show died on air. Episode 1 went out on 9 September 2001 .and stood in front of a passing Stagecoach bus. (Stagecoach's founder had sponsored Two days later, New York exploded, the world went mad, and so did the TV schedulesa lot of anti-gay legislation in Scotland. Marvellously, by accident, it's a Stagecoach (the least important thing, I admit), so its timeslot was shifted left, right and centre.bus that Nathan gets on in Queer as Folk for his 'I'm doing it!' speech. You can see

the months later, I won ComedyStagecoach logo clearly!) A few camp old things joined Wynnie in the road, everyone Writer of the Year at the British Comedy Awards! For Bob 6- Rose\ Live on ITV! Idanced, the driver shouted, then it cleared and the bus went on. However, during that thanked my mum, which was nice. Bear in mind, Bob & Rose was in competitionmoment, every political speaker on stage turned their back and pretended it wasn't against the first years of The Office and Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights. I didn't even thinkhappening. I just stood there, too, and didn't join in. And then everyone went home - *Bob & Rose was a comedy, really. For a long time, I thought that award was a sort of* because what do rallies do? Nothing, I suspect. But then, I thought, I can use that... 9/11 reaction - the championing of a sweet romance in the middle of what felt like

When we came to film that scene, we ended up in the same square, with a lot of World War III. Or it was a protest vote against bad scheduling. Or it was a gay thing.the same people in the crowd - casting went and trawled the Village for the genuine It's only in the past year or so - you really do spend that long thinking about thingsarticles - and with Wynnie herself recreating that moment. In full costume. But better! that you wrote - that it's begun to occur to me why it won. Maybe it was brilliant.With results! It was a bizarre day. A beautiful day. My favourite day's filming ever. That's why. Yeah.That's not because of the sheer act of recreation, although that was a nice by-product, 'You there! Gorgeous creature!' Some things are just perfect, and that's one of them.but because it's Bob and his mum and Holly (oh, poor Holly) who make it work. 8

We went to rehearse that speech, Penelope Wilton on stage, her voice rising... and FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 6 MAY 2007 05:48:05 GMT

everyone listened. Even the drag queens were silent. Passers-by were stopping to listen. **RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING**It was real. It was like Monica Gossage's speech was real. And then Jessica Stevenson Russell! You've topped The Independent's Pink List! You're the UK's Number One Gay!began to cry. And so did I. Actually, I'm sort of tearful just typing this, no kidding. It Do you get an actual award? Sir Ian McKellen won it last year. I bet he got an award.was so wonderful. People in the crowd were crying and hugging me, and saying, 'Why Mind you, Peter Mandelson came fifth. Fifth! Who'd put Peter Mandelson on a Topcan't it really be like this?' Everyone became devoted to that scene and gave everything 101 list of anything?in every take. Christ, I know I exaggerate, but that's word for word how it happened.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 6 MAY 2007 23:37:26 GMT8 Bob Gossage (Alan Davies), his mum Monica (Penelope Wilton) and his best friend Holly Vance (Jessica Stevenson), who's madly in love with him.

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

RE:

Number One most. . . er, most what? I'm not sure. Most influential? Most powerful?

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DOCTOR	WHOS	THE	WRITER'S
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Most sexy? Er, no! Still, it's the most in the land, and I'm Number One. Ahead of all It was summed up best by Rachel Cooke in The Observer recently, where she said thatthe other homos in the UK. the online voice writes with a deep sense of exclusion. She wrote about that with some

On Thursday, I wrote a five-page pre-titles sequence for Torchwood 2.1. It's all I can anger, but also with a lot of sadness. I don't see the sadness myself. I think it's rightcontribute, a five-minute opener. But I love it. That's the blowfish in a sports car. It felt that they're excluded. Of course, it's always been that way, people have always carpedgood, and then I felt sad that I'm not writing a full Torchwood script. Ups and downs. on, but the internet means that we can all read it now. We're taught from childhoodAnd I spent the weekend rewriting Sarah Jane 1.7/1.8, all of which was ignoring the fact that the printed word has authority. If something is typed, it seems official. (Historythat I've about four weeks to deliver 4.X. Except I haven't. At midday yesterday, I realised will look back on this as the maddest time -- a period of ten years or so in which we'd miscalculated: it turns out that I've three weeks. Bollocks. I read my diary wrong. I'm all typed at each other!) So it can mess up writers when they read that endlessly criticala bloody idiot. Yesterday just dissolved into panic. I was going to write to you, because I voice. It's completely, completely destructive. I cannot see one iota of it that's helpful,thought it'd be a good thing to describe, but I couldn't even do that. I was sort of numb. except maybe in the toughening up. Helen is in a delicate position in that she's only

Sometimes I look at all these scripts piling up, and it defeats me. I love script-editing just started, and she's on the verge of being really very good - and now she finds herselfsessions with writers, but I hate the hours of reading that you have to do beforehand. ruined by this wall of hostility. It makes me furious.And I'll tell you what pisses me off most of all: a meeting with a writer has to negotiate

a hundred tricky things -- the writer's mood, their passion, their style, their ambition, FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 7 MAY 2007 04:40:59 GMT

their failures, their idiosyncrasies -- but now there's a new element entering the room: **RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING**writers wondering, 'What will they say about me?'

Meaning, online. More and more, Dear Number One,with every writer. It's those internet message boards. The forums. They destroy writers. »I read that stuff

and it doesn't stop me, not ever.«This job is full of doubts already, but now there's a whole new level of fear, shouting But has it ever? Does your resolve not to let the critics affect you come fromat us. It is now a writer's job, like it or not, to put up with it. It's

like when Helen experience?Raynor went on Outpost Gallifrey last month and read the reviews of her two Dalek

episodes. She said that she was, literally, shaking afterwards. Like she'd been

physically FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 7 MAY 2007 10:47:02 GMT

assaulted. I'm not exaggerating. She said it was like being in a pub when a fight breaks

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMINGout next to you. I had to spend two hours on the phone to her, talking her out of it,

It doesn't feel like a conscious resolve; it's just the way I am, I suppose. Only oneconvincing her that of course she can write, that we do need

her and want her. That word makes me furious, and that's 'lazy'. If someone calls

me that, I want to rip theirbastard internet voice gets into writers' heads and destabilises them massively.

head off. Honestly, it's the gap in my armour. It makes me vicious. Writers spend vast

The stupidest thing you can say is 'Ignore it', because no one can. Who can resist

amounts of their lives being modest, crippled by doubt, insecure, self-deprecating.

going in search of their own name on the internet? Coming to terms with it is the

Somewhere that has to stop.

key. Helen knows that now. It was the same with Murray Gold during Series One:

a It must be experience, though. That experience was Queer as Folk. The first three

massive loss of faith after the first episode leaked onto the internet, because he read the

weeks when it was on air, it was like I lived on the radio. I'd sit in my office with

Outpost Gallifrey comments about his music. He was saying, 'I don't know how to

calls booked for every half hour, sometimes for the whole day, talking to every Radio

do my job any more.' Noel Clarke read the online reviews of his portrayal of Mickey,

Back Yard in the country. I remember not having time to make a coffee. I considered

but at least he got angry. Yet none of them has been attacked as viciously as I've been.

moving a kettle into my office. Some of those were shock-jock radio stations, like

I always thought I was a big old poof (albeit Number One Poof!), but sometimes I

the old Talk Radio, where they'd be vile. Much to my surprise, I loved it. I'd weigh

think I must be made of some sort of steel. I read that stuff and it doesn't stop me, not

in and have a fine old time. I made the Talk Radio Breakfast DJs admit to not even

ever. I've got quite high-flown and fancy beliefs about art that maybe put it all into

having watched Queer as Folk. Later on, sitting in the BBC 5 Live studio, facing Nicky

perspective. Principally: it is not a democracy. Creating something is not a democracy.

Campbell while he complained about the Jill Dando joke in Queer as Folk 2, I was

The people have no say. The artist does. It doesn't matter what the people witter on

defending even that honestly.9 It toughens you up. There was one caller to that

show,

about; they and their response come after. They're not there for the creation. a retired teacher from an all-girls school, who said that she'd never taught a lesbian in

This is becoming one of the great arguments of the day, for populist writers especially.

It taps into the whole debate across journalism about the democratisation of the critic. 9 Dialogue in Queer as Folk 2 mentions a lethal drink named after murdered TV host Jill Dando - 'one shot goes straight to your

head'.

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**DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
THREE: BASTARDS**

all her born days. I told her that not only was she a bad teacher, but she'd let down 4.X pre-titles: the Doctor pulls the TARDIS off the prow of the Titanic (resolving the 3.13every girl that she'd ever taught - that she wasn't just retired, she was forgotten! The cliffhanger, where the Titanic crashes through the walls of the TARDIS control room),key to get through that whole time was not to defend the work, because I always think the TARDIS materialises in a cupboard on board, he steps out into Reception, wandersdefence sounds like an apology, but to go on the attack. It was exciting. through, seeing a lot of our supporting cast, goes out on deck, and the camera pulls out to

see

the Titanic flying above the Earth. Over the ship's Tannoy, we hear: 'Welcome aboardFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 7 MAY 2007 21:31:25 GMT the Starship Titanic! I know that pre-titles. SO WHY DON'T I WRITE IT?RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING Maybe

it's a dreadful decision to cross Doctor Who with a disaster movie. A lot ofHaving wittered on this morning, I've just found an interview with AA Gill in today's *Doctor Who is to do with why and who (why's the Titanic been hit? Who turned off theMedia Guardian, and he says, of being a critic: shields?), whereas the narrative of a disaster movie is more about how they survive. It's*

Can anyone do it? Is everyone's opinion worth the same? No. My opinion is worth more than difficult for the Doctor to investigate when he has to follow quite a linear path, simply

other people's. Of course that's a horrendously arrogant thing to say, but that is the nature and surviving. It suggests that one of the main characters is involved with the villainy ('Yes,

basis of criticism. If you are sticking your opinions in front of two million readers every Sunday, Doctor, it was me! I took down the shields!'), which is a hell of a coincidence, because

then you have to believe that your opinion is worth more. So that's a) hooray, and b) oh by definition, to get screen time, that character has to be one of the survivors who

Christ, I'm turning into bloody AA Gill! Mind you, later on in the paper, talking happens to be with the Doctor. It doesn't fit. Formats are clashing. And why would he

about some drama, it says: 'In the

most (or she?) be on board a ship that he's sabotaged? inappropriate piece of casting since Alan Davies was plonked into Bob & Rose...' But I've decided that 4.X should have an alien called Bannakaffalatta. We've Hmph! You see? You've got to be made of steel or you're flayed alive. budgeted for one spiky alien - I'd hate everyone on board the Titanic to be humanoid

so that's a good name. And I'm hung up on the idea that everyone should be in black
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 7 MAY 2007 23:07:27

GMT tie. Maybe the Doctor, too. And should the Angels use their haloes as weapons? Like RE: **CHRISTMAS IS COMING** killer

Frisbees? A nice scene with the Doctor and survivors fighting off flying Frisbees I've found the Independent Television Commission's Programme Complaints and with... well, with anything, with sticks of metal, swinging at them. But how do haloes Interventions Report on Queer as Folk 2. Apparently, 15 viewers (I know! That many!) kill? They can't slice off your head, not at 7pm on Christmas Day! Also, I'm thinking complained about your Jill Dando joke: that the Captain is part of the scheme. He's the saboteur - which is revealed early on.

The ITC recognised that some viewers had been very upset by this remark and was sorry for the He has a young, sexy Midshipman (is that the word, Midshipman?) with him, who

distress caused. However, given the dramatic context with its serious intent, the ITC concluded discovers the truth and survives. Maybe he's trapped on the damaged Flight Deck

that this 'joke' was not in breach of the Programme Code. I especially like the bit where trying to control things, while the Doctor is fighting to reach him.

they put the word 'joke' in inverted commas. Also, I spent ten minutes panicking that the 2008 Christmas Special is a lot closer

than

I think. Apart from 'Period drama, Cybermen in the snow,' it's blank. Christ!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 7 MAY 2007 23:30:18 GMT

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 8 MAY 2007 21:38:13 GMT

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

My favourite complaint was on Channel 4's daily log after Episode 1 of Queer as Folk was **RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING**

broadcast: 'My cleaner was so upset, I had to send her home!' Ha ha ha. I swear

to God Heard anything from Kylie yet? It's been a while, but the
tabloid rumours persist...
that's true.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 9 MAY 2007 01:41:17 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 8 MAY 2007 18:11:06 GMT

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

be Will Baker in the papers. Apparently, Kylie is still interested, but it's so

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

An update: Julie and Phil don't even have to ask how I'm getting on, they know
my

to get through her layers of agents and managers. It's like that with big stars.

moods, so they're planning to shift the start of filming back a week. Good. But
then Her agent has the synopsis, and then you hear sod all for
weeks. But David did go for

they ask me, 'Is that what you want to do?' And I say, 'Don't make it my
decision!' I dinner with her - and to the theatre, to see The Sound of
Music. How that didn't make

spent a long time wondering today, as I always do, why don't I just start?! I
know the the tabloids, I'll never know.

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CHAPTER FOUR

INT.

SPACESHIP

In which George Lucas is snubbed,
Charlie Hunnam's arse is discussed, and the
Controller of BBC One puts his foot in it

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 11 MAY 2007 15:20:45 GMT

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

I thought I should write to you, because I had a rush
of ideas just now. I'd gone out

to town to buy some food. It's always when I leave
this desk, things start clicking.

Literally, walking through Marks & Spencer. I know
I'm talking to myself. I must

look like a nutter. I thought, what if it's an insurance
claim? It's the people who own

the Titanic who have magnetised the hull to attract
the meteorites. No, I don't mean

insurance -- insurance would be insane, since your
shares would plummet if your ship

crashed. I mean that the Big Boss is on board, he has
set it up, he has himself a nice

stasis pod, protecting him from harm, so his people
can pluck him from the wreckage

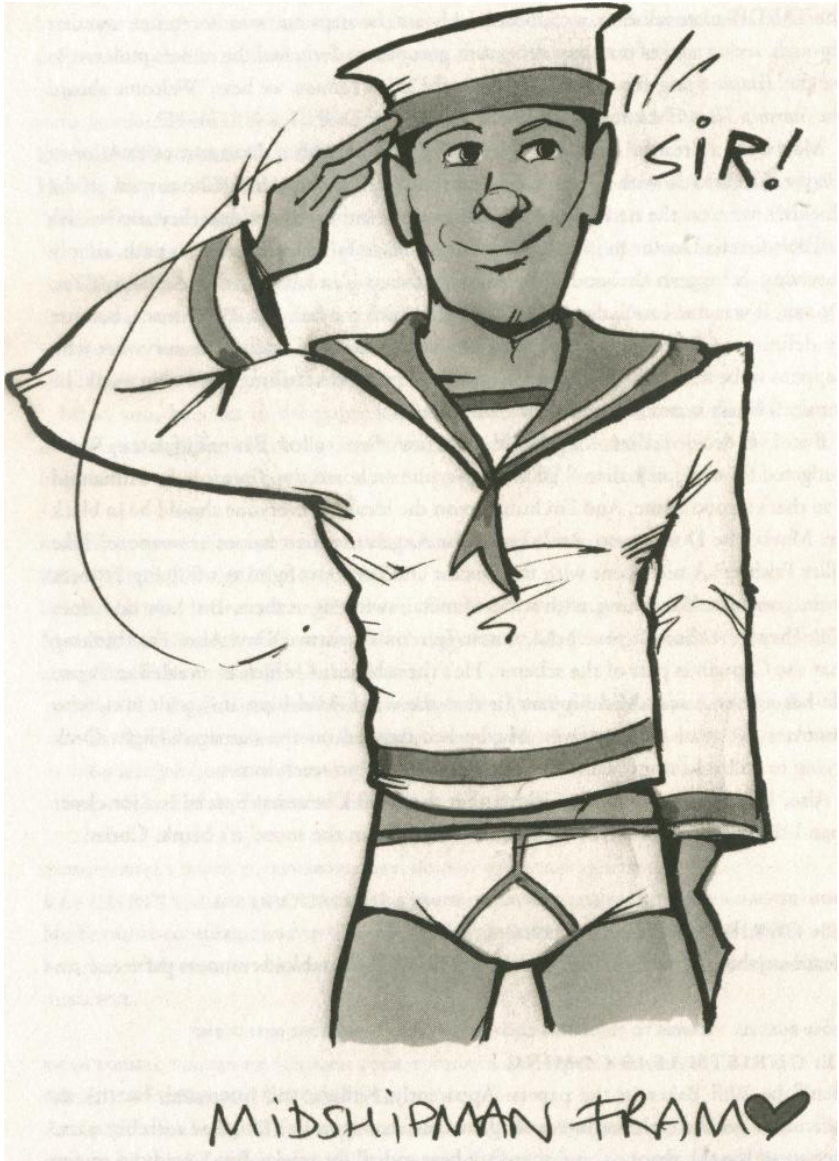
and he'll be declared dead. Or something. The Angels
are pre-programmed to kill the

survivors so that no one's left. The ship falling onto
the Earth is a by-product, not part

of the overall plan. And only the Doctor cares; to
everyone else it's just a primitive

planet below.

But why not fake a car crash? Why would the Big Boss take everyone with him? In



fact, if the ship is going to crash into the Earth, why do the Angels need to kill the

survivors at all? They're going to die anyway. But that sort of thing shouldn't stop me.

Let it ride. I mustn't bore myself with reasons why not. There are always a million dull

reasons why not. Go for the images, the feel of it, the potential, the dynamic. Details

come later. I'll think on.

@yuliasha

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

He's
 on the floor. Coughing. Smoke in the air. He waves his hand to
 Oh, and Kylie Minogue should die. That struck me like a thunderbolt in the
 taxi clear the air, looking up. Gobsmacked. back from town. Wham! Disaster
 movies should always have deaths of people that
 you THE DOCTOR don't want to die. She should be
 the next potential companion, but cops it. I'd never What? But... what??
 considered that before. That feels good. It's not so much the ideas; it's the fact I'm FX:
 WIDE SHOT, the PROW OF A SHIP, an old-fashioned liner, *nowhaving ideas.*
That's what feels good. sticking
 through the whole of the right-hand wall of the Tardis,
 filling
 half the space.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 11 MAY 2007 17:55:52 GMT The
 Doctor finds in the debris, a lifebelt. He flips it over. It
 says:
 TITANIC.RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING
 So... okay, really, honestly, why don't you start writing
 now? THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

What??!
 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 11 MAY 2007 18:30:02
 GMT (End repeat, new material.) He leaps to his feet, slams away at
 the

Tardis console.RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING
 I don't know. Honestly. I'm just sitting here like an idiot. Like a bloody idiot.
 All FX: the prow of the ship withdraws through the hole.

He
 slams more switches, the Time Rotor rising and falling, the day. I'm eating badly,
 smoking heavily... but that seems to be part of the getting-ready- sound of
 materialisation filling the air...to-write crap. I worked my way through about 50
 cigarettes with the Sarah Jane rewrite

TO: earlier this week. That's just absurd, even for me. I'm killing myself. I'm looking scruffy,
 because I'm not bothering to iron shirts. (The Number One Gay!) My VAT
 needs 2. INT. SMALL CUPBOARD - NIGHT doing, but I'm ignoring it. I
 missed my nieces' birthdays last week. I haven't even sent a Tiny, dark linen cupboard,
 just big enough for...card. I still haven't sent a card. And I'm as horny as hell. Like a stupid

teenager. That's

FX:

the TARDIS materialises.more like it, though. That's a better description of what this process actually feels

like.

THE

DOCTOR steps out, still brushing himself down. Opens the

cupboard

door, steps out -

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 15 MAY 2007 19:01:40 GMT CUT TO:RE:

CHRISTMAS IS COMING

3.

INT. TITANIC RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS I'm in a stinking mood. Panic, panic, panic. Everyone is giving me a wide berth,

THE

DOCTOR steps Out.because I'm just being vicious to them. They recognise the signs. I suppose I should

Large

space, reception desk, all wood S marble, more TITANICwrite it all down properly, but even this correspondence can sod off-- signage, STEWARDS passing to and fro, and GUESTS in their finery,

chatting,

laughing. It all looks very 1912. Almost. And it's

No, it shouldn't. It won't. But that's how it feels. Just bad. I keep telling myself to

decked

out for Christmas, though nothing gaudy, all very classy. Thestart work at 9pm, to start typing. That's my latest target. Doctor walks through...

Men

in black tie. Ladies in posh dresses. Staff lookingFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 02:51:27 GMT immaculate. A WAITRESS in uniform - PETH, young, feisty - walks

past

the Doctor, carrying a tray. Then he sees -RE: **CHRISTMAS IS COMING**

Hmm, look, I started. Not at 9pm, at midnight. Sheer panic. It'll do me good, waking Two GOLDEN ANGELS, guarding a set of internal doors. THE HEAVENLY

HOST.

They look like metal statues - tall, with beautiful gold,up tomorrow knowing that a 4.X file exists. That's better than nothing. blank faces, simple tunics, hands locked in a prayer gesture,

folded

wings, haloes suspended above their metal hair by thin

1. INT. TARDIS -
DAY struts. But as the
Doctor stares, one of them slowly turns his
head.

Looks at the Doctor.

REPEAT OF 3.13 SC.92. THE TARDIS in flight. THE DOCTOR walks around
the console. Deep in thought. And
then... Black eyes in a gold face.

EXPLOSION! The Doctor's showered with
debris! The Doctor crept out, then
distracted by seeing -

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER

FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

An alien - BANNAKAFFALATTA - strolling past, in black tie;
three relaxes a little:

foot tall, head like a spiky blue football.

CAPTAIN

HARDAKER (CONT'D)

And the Doctor's getting the hang of this now, keeps walking,
goes Now then, gentlemen. According to the traditions of the planet
to a metal ship-type door in the wall, marked DECK 15, spins
the below, Christmas is a time of celebration. I think you might
wheel, opens it - be entitled to
a tot of rum. Just the one! Off you go, I'll

keep watch.

CUT TO:

4. EXT. DECK 15 - CONTINUOUS Smiles,
salutes, 'Sir!', and the men head off... Except the

youngest,

MIDSHIPMAN BLANK, young, nervous.

THE DOCTOR steps out. Traditional deck, wooden floor, bronze
railing, Titanic lifebelts on display, GUESTS standing
with CAPTAIN HARDAKER

cocktails, enjoying the view. To the left, to the right, all very And you,
what was it...?

traditional. But in front...

MIDSHIP

BLANE

FX: the Doctor walks to the railing, the night beyond.
Revealing Blane, sir, Midshipman Blane.

that the blackness is not just night, it's SPACE, and below him:

THE

EARTH.

CAPTAIN

HARDAKER

You're new, I

take it?

CU The Doctor - he gets it!

BLANE

THE DOCTOR

Riiight... Only just
qualified, sir. First trip out!

FX: LONG HERO FX SHOT, ZOOM OUT from the Doctor on the
deck, CAPTAIN HARDAKER

pulling back to see the whole ship - A STARSHIP, exactly like the
Titanic, but with mighty antigravity engines underneath -
keep Then you can stand down, Midshipman. Go and enjoy yourself.

pulling out wider, to see the vessel sailing majestically above
the Earth. Over
this: MIDSHIPMAN
BLANE

I would, sir, but,
um... Regulations say the Bridge has to be
TANNOY staffed by
two crewmembers at any one time, sir.

Starship Titanic is now in orbit above Sol 3, also known
as Earth. Population: Human. And in accordance with
local CAPTAIN HARDAKER

customs: Merry Christmas! Well said.
Very good! Just you and me, then. It's only a

Level Three
planet down below, fairly primitive, they don't
CUT TO OPENING TITLES even know
we're here. Should be a quiet night.

5. EXT. FX
SHOT MIDSHIPMAN
BLANE

Yes, sir.

NEW ANGLE on THE TITANIC, its sheer beauty.

TO:

CUT TO: 7. INT.
BALLROOM - NIGHT

6. INT. BRIDGE - NIGHT THE

DOCTOR, now adjusting his black tie, walks in.

Quiet and dark. A long room, rather than deep, the only place with More
of a LOUNGE than a ballroom, tables and booths with GUESTS,

futuristic technology on display, computer banks, etc, though
at drinking, milling about; dotted about, 'more HEAVENLY HOST, standing

the centre there's still a big old-fashioned wooden SHIP'S
WHEEL. perfectly still; then a dance floor, and a stage, on which the

Facing windows, which look out onto BLACKNESS (the view will
be SINGER & BAND are performing a lounge-music-version of I Wish It

GREENSCREEN later). Could Be
Christmas Every Day.

CREW in smart 1912-ish uniform - NB, everything on board is only an All
normal, until the Doctor looks up...

approximation of the period. CAPTAIN HARDAKER stands centre - 60,
wise, calm. FX WIDE SHOT:

VAST ROOM, levels of seating rising up into a
vaulted roof,
GUESTS milling about.

CAPTAIN HARDAKER

Orbit nice and steady. Good work, Mr Cavill. And maintain The
Doctor strolls through, looking around...
position.

His POV:
BANNAKAFFALATTA, with some ordinary GUESTS, at a table,

Crew operate controls, the sound of engines slowing. The Captain all
laughing.

His POV: another
table, MORVIN (male) & STRUZIE (female), a large

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

pair, tucking into a buffet; they like their food. For some
 reason, they're dressed as cowboy &
 cowgirl. fags left. The script just felt so slow and
 dead without them. I only stopped writing

The Doctor then distracted by loud voices -

for
 tonight because those four have gone. I'm feeling desperate that I'll never write
 without
 smoking again. Series One and Two were written without fags, but that feelsThis is weird,
 showing it to someone at this stage. It feels so odd. But I'd better get like five million
 years ago now.used to it. Do you want to read this stuff? I've no idea. So far, I'm thinking... is
 it a bit But I haven't gone to bed yet. I'm too wired by cigarettes and the nicotine patch
 that Idull? The Doctor wandering is deadly dull. The Doctor is best under pressure. But
 it's ripped off.hard to generate plot until the meteorites hit. Then again, with all the
 on-air trailers »you talk about WIDE SHOTS, CUs, FX shots, camera
 angles and so on, butin December, everyone will know that it's a disaster movie, so
 there's a pleasure in just really who should determine this: the writer or
 the director?«meeting the characters. I want to hit the disaster by Page 15- about 11
 minutes in. I like to give some camera directions, but not too many, not so
 many that it readsThat feels
 right. like a list. When
 someone is reading a script - principally, the director - they should

Other thoughts: Midshipman Blane should be sexy as hell. I don't often think
 of *feel it, the pace, the speed, the atmosphere, the mood, the gags, the
 dread. I'll give*specific actors, but maybe Russell Tovey. Or posh like Lee Williams. Blane is
 not a camera directions that enhance the mood: WIDE SHOT if something is
 barren,sexy name, though. I'll change it. Struzie should be Debbie Chazen, who played
 Big lost, empty (or huge, busy, epic, if you've the budget), and CU (close-up)
 when it'sClaire in Mine All Mine. We offered her a Slitheen in The Sarah Jane Adventures,
 but focused, intense, when someone's whispering 'I love you'. I never bother with
 theshe begged to be in Doctor Who proper. A disaster movie needs a larger woman,
 and more ordinary technical shots like MCU (medium close-up) or LONG SHOT
 (youshe's a hoot. And Bannakaffalatta? Jimmy Vee. Oh, the thought of little Jimmy
 and can see the whole body, but not as wide as a WIDE SHOT), because they
 don't feelKylie in a scene
 together! like anything, do
 they? But I'll describe a crane shot, rising up or rising down, if the

moment
 is epic, if you need to feel that huge sweep of events. Also, frankly, then youFROM: BENJAMIN

COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 03:10:44 GMT

stand a good chance of the producer setting aside money for a crane, right from theRE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

start, for that scene. Cranes are expensive. But it's all emotion, in the end. Scripts canHow does it feel to have started, Russell? Good, surely? Apart from the strangeness of be so dry. Feel them. A lot of the time, new writers are told specifically -- and stronglysending what you've written to me already... - not to write camera angles, because it's the director's choice, but I reckon that's just

I'm privileged to be the first person to read this. Of course I want to! How could you power games. I've never heard of a director objecting, only power-broking producerseven ask? But I'll try to resist the temptation to be all subjective and say nice things and script editors talking on their behalf without consultation.- or horrible things (you never know) - about what you're sending me. If you decided Stagedirections,asopposedtocameradirections,areawholeart in themselves.Theclassicthat something worked because I'd said I think it's great, or that something didn't mistake that we get from newer writers, or writers not used to writing action, is somethingbecause I'd questioned it, I'm worried that this project would come crashing down like this:around our ears. At the very least, the world would stop turning. Let's see how long I

can remain an impartial observer. Invisible Ben! I will, however, be asking questions. The Doctor runs up the stairs, explosions all around him, and

soldiers appear, but he runs into a huge white space, with aFor example -- glowing blue column rising up into the sky, and it's crackling

It's technical, this one, but worth asking before we go on... you talk about WIDE like electricity, and a white halo surrounds him.

SHOTS, CUs, FX shots, camera angles and so on, but really who should determine this: the writer or the director? Do you, literally, write each shot into your script? Or Eh? What? What?! Calm down. Break it down. Tell me exactly what's happening. I do you plan them in your mind's eye but let the director decide? spend huge amounts of time making sure that stage directions match the tone and

rhythm of the scene - like in an action scene, where I use dashes instead of full stops

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 03:44:51 GMT to make sure that everything is moving fast:

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

How do I feel? Scared, because I should have started ages ago. Scared sick. Sick because BEN walks into the room, invisibly. He looks around. Sees the

wallet

by the bed.

I gave up smoking again on Saturday, but then I reached Page 2 and went scrabbling through bags and coats, like a teenager at a party, until I found an old pack with four He walks towards the wallet -

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

- but it explodes! -

gags
in the stage directions, self-referential statements about the actors and stuff. He
- and he's running, running, running -
personally is very present in his stage
directions, and it works brilliantly. Incidentally,

we're
the only people I've seen who do that FX line break: Do you see, you read it fast? It
feels energised. If that gets into the director's head, then

you stand a good chance of it working. Funnily enough, a semicolon always
looks FX: the prow of the ship withdraws through the hole. considered
and classy; it slows things down, makes you read more closely:

It's
a great system, though I'd beware of using it outside of Doctor Who circles. People

- BEN keeps running -
might not get it, because
it's unique. I say unique, but I'll probably discover that the

- and stops. He's in a huge, beautiful, empty
amphitheatre; whole of Hollywood does it now and always
did.

classical columns, white marble.

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 11:02:51 GMT

Another example: to put 'Pause' on a line of its own makes it feel like a
pause: **RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING**

One
more anal question (for now): when writing stage and camera directions, which

BEN looks around. He can hear
singing. words should you capitalise?
Once you've capitalised a word once, should you refrain

Pause. from
doing so for the rest of that scene?

Then he moves on...

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 12:29:1 2 GMT

RE:

CHRISTMAS IS COMING That's much more effective than: I capitalise every character's name when they first appear, but this is partly a production

thing,

so that the person drawing up the shooting schedule can spot the name easily in

BEN looks around. He can hear singing. Pause. Then he moves on. order to break down who's in which scene. That's why, if a character is referred to but

they're

not in the scene, they're not capitalised: The first version feels the same as what Ben is feeling. I think that's vital. And I strip

out adverbs like crazy, because they don't sound dynamic. (This is really personal stuff CU THE DOCTOR. He's thinking of Rose. now. Other writers would be guffawing.) I prefer to write:

I

used to capitalise names all the way through. A lot of people do. But then I noticed

BEN runs across the amphitheatre, fast - that Paul Abbott changed his system, that he only capitalised them the first time they

appear.

At about the same time, Nick Elliott (Controller of Drama) at ITV said to me, Instead of: 'Why do

people use all these capitals? Why are they shouting at me?' So I changed,

too.

As for other words, it's very indiscriminate, but I tend to do it when it's

BEN runs across the amphitheatre quickly.

important:

The first one feels faster, whereas the second is too considered. It's not a novel; it's a Ben pulls out a LASER GUN. script and it has to flow. It has to feel like pictures. (I like this new script, by the way.

Your wallet exploded and you ran into an amphitheatre. I might add some gladiators Then he RUNS! in a minute. Be warned!)

I avoid the word 'we', too. It's a real pain to eliminate it - along with 'our' and 'us' It's kind of telling the director: show this! But a lot of people don't do it at all. If it's-- and other writers seem to use it with no ill effects, but it feels wrong to me. 'We see worrying you, don't do it. But I do think it gives the script energy, sometimes. BEN running.' I prefer 'BEN is running', because there is no 'we' inside the script;

there's just Ben. Steven Moffat is a good example of the opposite: he's all 'we' and

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 20 07 20:52:44 GMT
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 18:48:18 GMT

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING RE: CHRISTMAS
IS COMING Here's more. I tend to do this, work all day in a panic, then stop at 6pm-ish, catch up »We care about Nathan in Queer as Folk within two minutes flat -- but is that just with rushes and e-mails, then return to writing at about 9pm or 10pm, depending on down to Charlie Hunnam's lost-puppy-dog eyes? «what's on telly. But I thought I'd show you this now. I keep changing as I go along, too Charlie Hunnam's arse, I'd say. Lovely man, Charlie. He's really clever. At his fast for you to note. For instance, I realised while writing earlier today that I didn't have audition, we asked him his favourite actor. He said, 'Christopher Walken,' which is the Host malfunction at any point - and I was lacking spookiness - so I went back and just about the most intelligent reply I've ever heard to that question. Plus, the arse!

I am hooting at those Frubes. They're the only licensed product that Julie and I were wrote that into the middle of Scene 7. There's a rewrite that no one ever saw.

ever unsure about, but that sort of thing can be worth a fortune for BBC Worldwide.

My thoughts on it so far: I like the Doctor and Peth; they feel good, nice dialogue.

The how-to-make-an-audience-care thing is hard. I'll come back to that, I promise.

It makes it all feel more real. It's very, very strange writing dialogue that might be said by Kylie! Morvin and Foon (I thought Struzie was sayable in too many different ways,

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 22:55:06 GMT

so I changed it to Foon) are sweet. Too sweet? These Christmas Specials are so direct, so plain, so on-the-nose. But so they should be. It's Christmas. It's not the time for The

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

You're mentioned in the new Radio Times. TV reviewer Alison Graham says that you *Girl in the Fireplace or Human Nature. But I really should have started weeks ago. Oh*

and your team 'must be hurt' not to have received BAFTA nominations this year. She Christ! What I'm really thinking is: it's crap, I'm rubbish, this will be a public debacle.

has

a point. It's an odd list, isn't it? Notable omissions.

Christmas Day, with everyone watching -- what a way to fail! That's public execution.

But I suppose we can take this insecure crap as read from now on.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 23:03:34 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 2 0:37:42 GMT

RE:

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

Let

us never change that subject line. Ever. Mmm.

RE: CHRISTMAS IS COMING

I'm

not bothered about the BAFTAs, to be honest. Last year was so extraordinary, it

I've just been to Sainsbury's. They're selling Doctor Who Petits Pilsous Frubes. Cyber-

can

never be topped.¹ Besides, history decides in the end. Everyone thinks that Queer

Strawberry flavour. Slogan: 'I'm f... f... f... frozen in time!' Is your fridge full of this

as

Folk won a BAFTA, when it wasn't even nominated. Now, that was shocking. And

stuff, Russell?

the

last thing that I need is a night in London. I'm mad and script-obsessed at the

Thanks for the f... f... f... further instalment of script. A couple of months back, moment, therefore a bit destructive. The other day (I didn't tell you this), my agent

we considered whether lead characters have to be sympathetic, and it's a disaster movie got a call from George Lucas' people. Apparently, Lucas is in London and he wants to

convention that the headlining catastrophe is made more comprehensible by showing it meet me about writing for his new Star Wars TV series! But I said no. Well, I can't go

impacting on characters that we care for. But how do you make an audience care about to London, I haven't the time, and Lucas didn't exactly beat a path to Cardiff, so he

your characters? And quickly? Movies in this genre often present 'stock' figures - the can't be that interested. Mind you, they really want a UK writer, apparently. When I

star-crossed lovers, the courageous-but-doomed hero - so is that it? Is it

identifiability find out who it is, I won't be so snooty; I'll just be jealous.

that makes us care? Or universal traits? Must we find aspects of Bannakaffalatta with which we identify? (We're all a bit spiky from time to time!) Or furnish your characters

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 17 MAY 2007 02:23:36 GMT

with a rich spectrum of personal details? The more they reveal about themselves, the

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

more we care? Or do you focus on their vulnerability? To offer another example, at

Phew, 12 pages, almost! That's a good day. It doesn't feel quite as terrifying as normal,

what point in Bob & Rose do we start to care about Bob and Rose? And why? We care

maybe because a disaster movie has an inbuilt shape: arrive, disaster, climb, safety. That

about Nathan in Queer as Folk within two minutes flat -- but is that just down to

shape helps.

Charlie Hunnam's lost-puppy-dog eyes?

I'm on Page 16, and we're close to the disaster. I keep page-counting. It's a constant

Right. I'm off. My f... f... f... flatmate, Matt, is eating Martha Jones, and I'm

tick. I can't help it. The script was 17-and-a-half pages, but I edited it down by cutting

enjoying the Moxx of Balhoon. And later I might try a Frube. Boom boom! Mmm...

Cyber-Strawberry!

At the 2006 British Academy Television Awards, Doctor Who won the Best Drama Series category, as well as the Pioneer

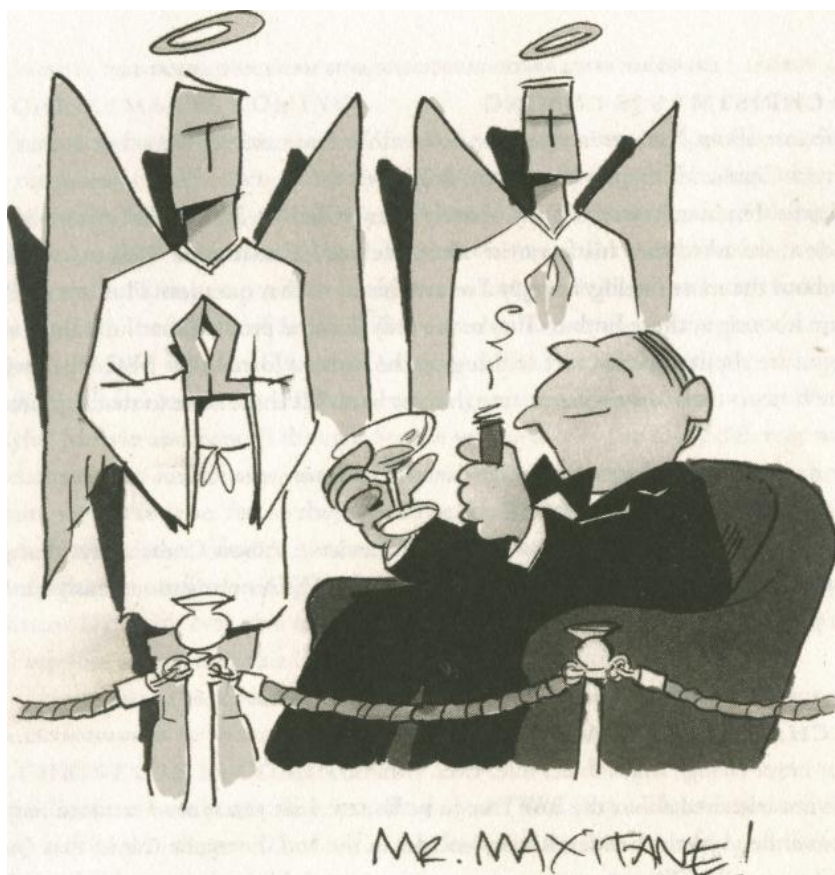
1

Audience

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

lines and shifting stage directions. Can the trip to Earth be cut, too? Is it a diversion?
It's

only there for the Buckingham Palace gag at the end. Then again, that gag is
brilliant. He'll never do it.

It keeps making me laugh, even now. I love a gag. Oh, and I went back and changed

Midshipman Blane to Midshipman Frame. Much sexier! Of course, they'll all
start
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
FRIDAY 18 MAY 2007 19:07:02 GMT

dying soon. I'm worried that the dying, though necessary, might be too horrible.
Also, RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

I'm thinking it's kind of obvious that Mr Maxitane is behind the whole thing. 3
Good The meteorite has hit! Also, there are some
changes to the scene order earlier on, and
thought tonight, though: the Host are programmed to kill surviving passengers...
but I've tweaked a few lines. I got that Tannoy speech
in Scene 4 right:
the Doctor is not a passenger! I like that. Nice.

Titanic is now in orbit above Sol 3, also known as

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 17 MAY 2007 08:34:20
GMT Earth. Population: Human. Ladies
and gentlemen, welcome to

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S
ARSE

Hang on... Prince Charles?? Kylie Minogue I can believe, but the Prince of Wales?

better, isn't it? And I've made Bannakaffalatta red, not blue, because he was too

2 A group of passengers from the Titanic - including the Doctor and 'Peth' - led by the ship's historian, Mr Copper,
teleport Moxx-like.

down to Earth for some sightseeing... to find London almost deserted. A lone newspaper seller, Stan, explains that
'everyone's

scarpered, 'cept me and her Majesty,' in the light of the previous two Christmases' alien invasion attempts (2.X and
3.X). I've solved the coincidence of the Doctor knowing all the survivors, by making

3 'Mr Maxitane' (Max Capricorn in later drafts) is the boss of the Titanic - a fat mogul with a cigar and bodyguards.

4 In this original draft of 4.X, a BBC news programme on newspaperman Stan's portable TV shows Charles, Prince of
Wales, him to blame for all the survivors being together at the time of the accident. It's
a

being interviewed: 'My mother will be staying in Buckingham Palace throughout the festive season, to show the
people of

London, and the world, that there is nothing to
fear.' lot of effort and page
count to get them all together in that corridor, but it'll save



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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

Bloody Smash. It's strong, bold and punchy on Christmas Day. Very blockbuster. in the car, I wondered if the Host should start each speech with 'Information'...? you are on board the Titanic? 'Information: you are all going to die.' verbal tic. It makes them 'imitatable'. Kids in the playground and all that. And it to keep explaining what they are -- information points -- because their function really clear. I might try it.

Big
Also,
'Information'
Nice
helps
isn't

RE:

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

nights, I'm just wasting my time. I've spent hours sitting here (I'm back in Cardiff
making poxy little changes to 4.X, but not getting anything more written. For
I took out the Doctor showing his psychic paper to the Host, because I'm
sure that psychic paper works on robots.⁵ I didn't have a day to lose, but I've lost
Bollocks. I don't have the energy to write the rest of the meteorites-hitting stuff. I'm
by the gaping holes, the blank paper, to come.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 MAY 2007 19:16:24 GMT

RE:

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

Minogue just phoned me!!!

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 22 MAY 2007 19:20:40 GMT

RE:

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

time later. On the whole, I think it works by being really obvious. Also, I
spent a I hope you told her you were busy. She should go

long time thinking that the meteorites wouldn't be burning. They'd be rocks.
They'd through your agent like everyone else.

only burn on entering the atmosphere. But they need to be burning, because
it looks

better, so I gave Frame and the Captain a bit of dialogue saying they were
composed

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 MAY 2007 19:25:00 GMT

of 'flammable nitrofine rock'... and then cut it, because that's dull and I don't
care. **RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE**

They're gonna
burn! I told her we
were going for Dannii.⁶

No,

I didn't recognise the number, so I didn't answer. D'oh! But that means she's on

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 19 MAY 2007 00:48:06 GMT
my answerphone, which is better. And now I'm on hers. She wants to chat about Peth

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE - actor-y stuff, I think.
She's talking about getting a drama coach. My God, this is

I'm back in Manchester. I doubt I'll be able to work on the script this weekend, because really, really real! (I still won't believe it until she's in Upper Boat.)⁷

I have to write up my notes on those seven bloody scripts -- which are now nine -- and

watch an edit of 3.12, and... and... oh it's absurd! At least that'll leave next week free FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 23 MAY 2007 23:47:18 GMT

to write all the time. RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

A few notes about that latest draft: in the rush towards the meteorites, I completely Lordy God. No script, again. I spent all day sorting out other people's scripts. I woke

forgot to write any more Mr Maxitane. I remembered him in the car on the way up.

Whoops! But I love Midshipman Frame. I can't decide if he should live or die, though ⁵ The Doctor's psychic paper, an apparently blank piece of card in a small leather wallet, debuted in 1.2. It allows whoever is

he'll certainly survive a lot longer. The Captain, too, is quite good and grave -- well, holding it to show people whatever they want them to see on the card.

6

Dannii Minogue. Kylie's sister.

again, he's far from subtle, but this isn't about character portraits; it's all about one ⁷ Upper Boat is the Cardiff-based studio complex where Doctor Who, Torchwood, and The Sarah Jane Adventures are

filmed.

Standing sets such as the TARDIS control room, the Torchwood Hub, and Sarah Jane's attic are stored here.

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up, saw the sunshine, and refused to go into the BBC, so I set up shop outside the part for him. Oh! Unless he could do a cameo as the Captain? And Kylie is now leaving meStarbucks in Cardiff Bay - and all the Series Four writers came to me, one by one. texts: 'Sorry I haven't phoned back. I'm in Cannes and it's crazy.' This is surreal. And IMe, Julie and Phil, sitting outside, like Starbucks shareholders. It was brilliant. But I am thinking about your how-to-make-an-audience-care question...spent a total of nine hours talking. Talking, talking, talking. Nine bloody hours. It's broken the back of a lot of stories, so it'll pay off. Now, finally, I can get back to work.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 26 MAY 2007 03:12:39 GMT

characters

Now,
though, I start to worry that it's too long, that it'll end up at a hundred pages.
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 25 MAY 2007 15:26:57 GMT
It should be 80 pages

COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 25 MAY 2007 15:26:57 GMT

It should be 80 pages for 60 minutes. And the expense is beginning to freak me out.**RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE**

Maybe I could make it

ARSE

Maybe I could make it cheaper by having Midshipman Frame tie a rope out of all his You've said that Kylie should die, but I'm not convinced you'll go through with it. I clothes and haul up the survivors. Yes, that'll do. reckon Rickston will die, because he's young and ruthless.⁸ But then maybe that's what *It feels all right, though. Worry, fear, deadline, late, budget, all of that, but I've felt* you want us to think. Mr Copper is too sweet to snuff it. But the same could be said much worse at this midway stage. I might keep moaning about the disaster movie of Bannakaffalatta, and I'm sure you'll relish giving the conker a horrible death. And format, but I can use it to pull myself along. I think, in the end, it helps. It's a funny Morvin and Foon are fat, so they've no chance. Midshipman Frame might die, too. old format. It doesn't exactly make room for subtext, which is fine, it's Christmas Day Probably from hypothermia after he accidentally loses all his clothes. entertainment --

My favourite stage direction so far is: 'STUNT as a HANDSOME MAN falls off the balcony, plunges down.' You introduce and kill off a man in the very same line, but the Moors Murders, and it did me no good at all. I sunk into a proper old gloom. I make him handsome - what, to rub it in? Poor Handsome. I didn't even tell you about it, because it was foul. Peter Morgan is such a fine writer,

damn him. All writers hate other writers. It is a competition. His Longford script was so fine and subtle, so deceptively simple, heartbreaking and true, and I was so powerfully RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE jealous. I thought, I'm sitting here typing TNT. SPACESHIP! What am I doing with Yes, I'll try to take off the Midshipman's clothes. Well, maybe his jacket. Oh God, my career?! The answer is, having a wonderful time, with absolute freedom, I know, I think I fancy Midshipman Frame! That's weird, isn't it? It's like fancying a cartoon I know. All the same, looking at Longford, the real tick and beat and pulse that goes character - which is entirely possible. Oh, it's all sex. I can never say that enough. Do I on between people, the sheer epic quality of ordinary life, even the lives of Lords and only write in handsome men because I think, I honestly think, that we'll cast someone murderers, made me ache. gorgeous, he'll fancy me like mad, and maybe even fall madly in love with me? This has I'm not knocking Doctor Who here, or my love of it. This show should be different. never happened. I'm still thinking of Russell Tovey for Frame, because a) he's brilliant But I do wonder -- to be sort of snotty about it, I suppose -- whether I'm coarsening (one of the best young actors in the country), b) he's strangely sexy, and c) he's gay, and myself; when I go back to regular drama, it'll be like starting again from scratch. That's therefore d) the above plan will finally happen. why I turned down the opportunity to meet George Lucas the other day. The thought

In other news, Dennis Hopper still wants to be in it. He's offered to clear three weeks of more years typing 'INT. SPACESHIP' and playing with other people's toys... If for us. But the only character he could play is Mr Copper, which is hardly a big enough mean, no matter how much I love Doctor Who, it's not mine. I didn't create this show.

Ah well. Lucas might not have liked me anyway. And I can always tell people that I turned him down. 8 Sharp young businessman Rickston Slade.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SATURDAY 26 MAY 2007 21:11:52 GMT

weight. When he describes the Titanic as 'an old ship, full of aches and pains', he's

about himself, really.**RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE**

So. You know in rough blocks what comes next. But do you often change your mind

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 27 MAY 2007 01:09:47 GMTas you write? About big things? Literally, midway through a script? Like whether or not

to kill off a character? Originally, in New Earth, the Face of Boe bit the dust, but got a

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSEreprieve in later drafts.⁹ Even JK Rowling, who's had the final Harry Potter book (I can't »I swing wildly between thinking, he's so good, he should survive, he's so good, he

die.«wait!) planned for years now, has said that she's decided to save one key character from

certain death, but kill off two others that she'd planned to keep alive...¹⁰ And what decides? Well, you do. Obviously. But what's stopping you deciding right

Or will it come down to how you're feeling on the day? The mood that you'reFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 26 MAY 2007 22:42:12 GMT

when you sit down to write his final scene? Or whether there's room in the story

another death? Or are you putting off making a decision because you've become**RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE**

Do you -- whisper the word -- care about La Frame?Old Boe's demise shifted from New Earth because that was in the draft in which

everyone dies, even the patients, and it was miserable as hell for an Episode 1. At the

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 27 MAY 2007 11:25:49 GMTsame time, we'd just been commissioned for Series Three, and I realised how huge that

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE 'You are not alone' could be if held back till Gridlock. But I don't often change really

I'm loving La Frame, but the script will decide -- the tone of it, the feel of it, the big things like that as I write. I'd say things develop, rather than change...

of it. Actually, to be blunt, I think Christmas Day will be the eventual decider.

Holly in Bob & Rose was written, in her first scenes, as just The Gay Man's Best

death would be towards the end of the Special, and that would be such a

Friend. She was the comedy support, nothing more. During Episode 1, Holly went

Then again, I love writing a good death.

on that date with Bob and the schoolteacher, as best friend and fag hag, and all the

you - whisper the word - care about La Frame?«

way through, literally as I was typing, I was thinking, this character's dull - and how

do you make an audience care about your characters? I've been struggling with

do I make this story last six episodes? And then... you know how annoyed I get when

question. 4.X is full of what Hollywood calls 'pat the dog scenes' (an old phrase

writers bang on about characters having lives of their own? Well, this is the closest I

that if a character pats a dog, that character must be good), and that's because

can ever remember to feeling like that, because Bob, Holly and the teacher were out on

the disaster movie set-up - or maybe the speed with which you have to introduce any

that date, and Holly found herself alone with the teacher, and then all of a sudden...

character in Doctor Who, given that they're components of a much bigger,
she was lying. She was saying things that would split up Bob and the teacher. I
can

odder format. Frame is young and dutiful, so we like him; Morvin and Foon have
remember that like an explosion in my head -- it was as though she started lying
in

their tickets because they like TV, so we like them; Peth is shining with sheer 'I
love

front of me. (I love writing liars. Everyone lies.) Suddenly, on the spot, the show
had

Doctor', so we like her. We like waitresses anyway, because we empathise towards
three lead characters -- and, more importantly, I'd enough story for six episodes.

working classes. That's a whole discussion in itself. In the end, though, I think what
I know exactly who lives and who dies in 4.X, except for Midshipman Frame,

talking about is story, not character. You care about a character because they're in
the

although I keep playing with it in my head - because that's the same game that
the *story. You've chosen this story, you've
switched on this programme, you've picked up this*

audience will be playing. (Your list of survivors was interesting, because I've
fooled you book, you've paid to see this film, and
that's where the caring comes from. Your choice.

a little bit, which is good for this format.) Actually, Frame is the most
interesting one. I Your investment. From thereon in,
it's up to the story. (That's where it can go wrong:

love him for not telling the Doctor that he's injured (see, lying again), because
that's so if the story doesn't work, the characters
aren't served.) It goes way beyond pat-the-dog

selfless and professional - so I swing wildly between thinking, he's so good, he
should moments; it's the space that characters
occupy in the story, the role that they fulfil, the

survive, he's so good, he should die. Poor soul. In fact, I think the character that
I've *reason that they're on screen that attracts
you...*

most enjoyed writing in 4.X is the Captain - again, because he's lying. That gives him How can I explain this better? It's pictorial. This is a visual medium, but visuals

have to mean landscapes, long lenses, stunts, hundreds of extras; it's the ordinary

9 The Face of Boe, a gigantic face in a case, debuted in Doctor Who 1.2. Russell intended the Face to die in 2.1, in a hospital pictures, the sheer existence of people on screen, the fact that I've chosen to put them

on New Earth, after revealing his greatest secret - 'You are not alone' - to the Doctor, but this was removed from later drafts.

Instead, the Face died -- and imparted his words of wisdom - in 3.3. there and that you've chosen to watch. I realised this on The Second Coming, when

10 Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, released on 21 July 2007, is the final book in Rowling's heptalogy of Harry Potter novels.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

we spent a million drafts on Steve and Judith's backstory - the fact that they'd always
That's a love story.<known each other, always sort of
fancied each other, she'd got married and divorced, This, I
suppose, is why we warm to the idea of the Doctor and Rose in love. Butand these two
inarticulate idiots were still dancing around each other." An awful lot
of that's pictorial, really. That's all about images. It's because they
look right together. Ifthought and script meetings went into that, all of it compressed into
their conversation we thought about it reasonably, we'd realise that
he's 900-odd years old and she's barelyout on the pavement at the beginning, before their
first kiss and Steve's awakening out of her teens, and then it's
just wrong!as the Son of God. All of that work was to establish, simply and fundamentally, an
attraction between them. When I watched it back - well, after I'd watched it
many FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 27 MAY
2007 19:01:58 GMT

times - I realised the most crucial thing: none of that was necessary. The fact
that RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSELesley Sharp and
Christopher Eccleston were on screen, at the same time,
together That's so true. How many 'love' lines are there
between the Doctor and Rose? About six!- especially late at night, outside a city-centre club -
did all the work. You could lose And yet it's talked about as the
central spine of the series. Well, that's a bit disingenuous,the sound and still realise what was
happening between those two. Put a man and because that's
what I wanted, but we didn't really have to try. Man, woman, on screena woman of roughly
the same age on screen and you're telling a story. That's a
love = love story. Very little work necessary.story.
(Storytelling is very heterosexual in that sense. But that's why gay
storytelling I hooked onto that visual thing with the transmission
of The Second Coming, becauseis exciting, because the images are still new.) The choice to
put those two characters ITV was braced for an absolute storm of
protest... which never really came. Lots oftogether on screen, in a story, is the crucial thing.
Everything else is just detail. And mad phone calls, a couple of death
threats, but all very normal. Quite apart from theluck. That's what makes you care. The
archetypes. They run deep. theory that maybe
it was crap and no one was bothered (that doesn't usually stop the

Back to basics: the most important thing is honesty. That's where Tony from Skins -
religious hardcore), I think the key was that it didn't disrupt or
criticise - or even use

your favourite - is interesting, because he's undoubtedly meant to be a Stuart from
Queer - the classic religious iconography. No classic pictures.
No crucifixes. No angels. That's

as Folk, but he doesn't connect with us so easily, because there's barely any

recognition.

what people get upset about, when the pictures are played with, especially when the

Tony isn't believable. (Perhaps the kids do like Tony, but maybe that's wish-fulfilment; pictures have been there since childhood. If they're that deeply embedded, then they're

they want to be like him, therefore they admire him. But you have to be younger, I sacrosanct.

think, for that to work. Plus, he did look good in his pants - and there we're back to That simple image thing is right at the root of homophobia, too. The fundamental

pictures again!) You can see what they were trying to do on *Skins*, because the plan for image of life, of family, of childhood, of survival, is man and woman. Every story,

Series One, as we now know, was to bring down Tony, to make him suffer, make him every myth, every image reinforces that. Even the images of the real world reinforce

realise that he's wrong, and therefore ascend to sympathy. They almost got there by the that, because statistically heterosexuality is the norm. It's the default. It's the icon.

end, but only by having Tony pat a dog - more specifically, hit a bus! (They had to mow Man/man or woman/woman disrupts a fundamental childhood image. Homophobia

him down in the finale in order to make us care!) I love the fact that everyone expected does seem to come from some gut instinct that's beyond the religious or the physical

Stuart to follow that path. So many people wanted him to be brought down. Or run act or whatever. It's primal, and I think that's from the pictures. It's from what we see

over. Except I never did that. He survived anything thrown at him. and what we're shown. That's why, in this gay lark, I stress visibility. Change the law,

I've gone from dogs, to waitresses, to pavements, to Tony in his pants, all to answer have education classes, do whatever you want, just be seen. I don't just mean on *Pride*

your caring question, when, if I were giving advice to you about your very first script, Marches, because they're shoved away in an alcove, but I mean everywhere, all the

I'd just say: don't think about it. Ever. Don't sit there thinking, will anyone care about time. I barely ever do an interview without mentioning being gay, and that's deliberate.

my characters? Put your energy into making the characters real, and honest, and

true,
of the norm, then the

We have to become visible, especially to the young, as part

and interesting, and three-dimensional -- and the caring should follow. Like a
dog. picture starts to develop and widen.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 27 MAY 2007 23:37:06 GMTFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SUNDAY 27 MAY 2007 18:23:35 GMT

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE
RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE»Put a man and a woman of roughly the same age
on screen and you're telling a story. I've done little
work today. The only things I've changed are... I've renamed the

the 'Entertainment Lounge', which is more accurate; it's more of a hotel/bar.

I say Ballroom, the Locations Department will look for ballrooms to film in, no11 Video-shop
worker Steve Baxter (played by Christopher Eccleston) and schoolteacher Judith Roach (Lesley Sharp).

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

matter what the stage directions say. What's more, and rather annoyingly, I've looked it Bit more. Pox, really. I thought the Stairwell was going to be a short sequence, but itup and strictly those are meteoroids, not meteorites. Meteoroids only become meteors turned out to be long and bothersome, so I'm up to Page 47 already.when they hit the atmosphere, and meteorites are the rocks left behind. Damn it, I spent a lot of time going back through the rest of the script, tidying up nouns and'meteorites' sounds so much better! I wrestled with that for a while. I don't normally things: sometimes it's called COMMS BOARD, sometimes COMMS PANEL, so I've got so hung up on scientific detail - but I tend to think, if something is bugging my standardised that. (You'd be amazed how many finished scripts come through - evennon-scientific mind, then it's indeed a buggable offence and should be corrected. shooting scripts - that say DINING ROOM, then LIVING ROOM, then LOUNGE,

But I'm still ignoring the fact that the meteoroids wouldn't be burning since they're when in fact it's all the same room; the writer has just been careless and given it a

not in an atmosphere. Burning looks brilliant. different name each time. The Design Department will go out and look for three

different rooms!) And I went back and put a forklift truck into the Host ContainmentFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 28 MAY 2007 23:49:21 GMT Cells, because I might need it later. It's introduced in Scene 8:RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

An ENGINEER is driving up in a small FORKLIFT TRUCK, which has threeI've written nothing today. I know exactly what the next scene is. I'm just feeling sour. deactivated HOST stacked up on its scoop, horizontally, likeHey ho. dummies. Engineer brakes, gets out:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 28 MAY 2007 23:52:27 GMT

That's of them now, four of them on the blink.RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE But which came first: the feeling sour, or the not writing?

The forklift's eventual fate is horribly expensive, so that's a worry. It might get cut.

Oh! Forgot to tell you - looking up the real Titanic online today, what did I find? AFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. TUESDAY 29 MAY 2007 00:12:24 GMT

computer game, released in 1998, called - wait for it - Starship Titanid By Douglas Adams!RE:

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

I
got straight onto BBC Editorial Policy to see if we're all right copyright-wise. If we'reOne
feeds into the other. It drives me mental. I think the feeling sour comes first,

not...
oh, damn! I musthave heard of it, and yet this feels brand new. I got the title Starshipthough
equally it comes from the script, all those voices at the back of my head saying,

Titanic
off of Peter McKinstry's design sketch for the 4.X vessel. I thought, ooh, nice
title.'Is this a waste of BBC money?' And then an external trigger allows them dominance.

The
funny thing is, you can't copyright titles. I could call 4.X Oklahoma! if I wanted to,That
Longford last week really didn't help. Neither did the broadcast of Human Nature

though
that would be odd. I've suggested Voyage of the Damned instead. Strangely, thison Saturday,
to be honest - in a really, really selfish way. I had a whole Sunday of people

does
have one benefit: we always end Episode 13 with the graphic 'DOCTOR WHO'saying, "That
was brilliant,' and specifically, 'What a brilliant script. Paul Cornell is a

WILL
RETURN AT CHRISTMAS IN...', plus the title, and the word 'Starship' wouldgenius.' Which he
is. But I'm thinking, if only you knew how much of that I wrote!

have
given away that it's not the real Titanic crashing through the TARDIS at the end ofBut I stifle
myself, so it all goes inwards. It festers. People know that I polish stuff,

3.13.
The new title might help... if the secret isn't blown by then anyway.but they think that
polishing means adding a gag or an epigram, not writing half the

Talking
of secrets blown, tomorrow's Sun is running our plan to take Doctor Whoscript. I know it
shouldn't, but it drives me mad. How selfish. But tiny things like that

off
air after 2008. Bollocks! God knows how they got hold of that. Their contacts aregang up on
me.

good.
With any luck, no one will believe them - or we'll be facing a media storm. It's a

nightmare.
It's way too soon for this information to be released. Peter Fincham is now

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 30 MAY 2007 03:45:29 GMT

talking
about overruling Jane Tranter, and doing only one Special for Christmas 2008,

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

then

getting a whole new team in place for a full series in 2009, or something. Good

Back in action! Well, eight pages. They're eminently cuttable - it's the backstory stuff luck to 'em. I'll be gone.

-- but that's the way to afford this, lots of chat. If the page count is too long, then these

things considered, it's not been a great day. All

pages will be cut, but it's good to write anything to get me over that hump.

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 31 MAY 2007 12:31:56 GMT FROM:

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 30 MAY 2007 23:45:39 GMT

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE RE:

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

a computer game! Did I know that? I must have heard about Douglas Adams' It's

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

Starship Titanic before now, so why didn't it ring any bells? Couldn't you say that starve people a bit. We're producing 14 movie-sized episodes a year, which are then it's a 'homage'? Maybe not. Or give it a subtitle? *Starship Titanic: At World's End...?* repeated ad infinitum, and ratings are bound to decline, even just a little. Doctor Who Definitely not.
a phenomenon right now, but nothing stays a phenomenon. Not without careful

You're right, The Sun is reporting that Doctor Who is ending after 2008. How that management. People need to be begging for new Doctor Who, instead of just expecting corresponds with the same paper's reports that David is leaving halfway through Series it. That's fine for kids, too. They can wait a few years between Harry Potter books and Four, I don't know. What does The Sun think will happen for the second half of Series *Star Wars films. If anything, the wait increases the legend.* Four? A different guest presenter will play the Doctor each week? (Hey, there's an idea! Meanwhile, a new production team can move in. Hopefully, they can start sniffing Copyright Benjamin Cook!) If you know in advance that a story like this is going to around even earlier than 2009, to see us at work on Series Four this year and next, appear in the tabloids, isn't there any way that you can spike it? Isn't it in The Sun's but that's a lot less essential than you'd think. No matter how much we complain that interest to keep you guys on side? this show is hard to make, it's still a UK drama, with scripts and crews and actors,

As things stand, what is the plan for 2009 and beyond? You talk of the BBC taking like any show. The best thing that a new team can do is move in, trample over the show off air for a while, but how long is a while? How long will we be waiting for way that we did things, and find new ways for themselves. While I'm sure that we'll a Series Five? Couldn't a new production team prep their episodes while you are still all be around to help and support the newcomers, they'd be better off packing up our production? Why can't the show just keep going? Wouldn't that be safer for Doctor stuff and throwing our boxes into the street. New show! New team! New start! The *Who's long-term future?*
complicated advice that needs to be passed on is nothing to do with the drama;

to do with negotiating the BBC. Publicity, funding, merchandising, BBC Wales FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 31 MAY 2007 18:42:10
GMT overheads, all those complicated areas.
(Julie's speciality!) You can't really see that in RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S

ARSE

action

but it can be explained over 57 coffees. The BBC is powerless with the press. No one can control the papers, they'll print But Doctor Who can run and run. Definitely. If it's managed this carefully. One day, of what they want, and we need them, so threatening to withhold or punish simply course, something will go wrong by accident, and people will look elsewhere, and something doesn't work. We'll just go crawling back, cap in hand. But the central problem is mean BBC Controller will take it off air... but only for it to come back blazing a few that the BBC is a public service broadcaster, funded by the public, so we are Not years later. That, now, is the definition of Doctor Who. It's the show that comes back. To Allowed To Lie - and we end up craven and apologetic. That's why the leak about the extent that we're building this Glorious Return into the 2010 schedules ourselves. It's Christopher Eccleston leaving could not be plugged. Once asked by The Mirror, Jane not quite like any other show - which has always been Doctor Who's outstanding feature, Tranter could not deny it. Even though it ruined the surprise cliffhanger to Series One. don't you think? How incredible would it have been to keep the Ninth Doctor's regeneration a surprise?

But we had to be scrupulously honest. It's all still the consequences of the Hutton

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY

2 JUNE 2007 02:35:42 GMT

Inquiry.¹² But Doctor Who is hardly Hutton! This is fiction! I don't give a damn, I'll lie RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE all I like if it safeguards the stories that we're telling. They can't stop me. But there's Just rewrites today. A thousand fiddles on a thousand lines. Every day, when I reopen little point while Peter Fincham has to tell the truth. Madness. the file, I start right on Page 1 and go through it all again. I never go straight to where

The plan for 2009 and beyond? Well... we'll transmit Series Four next year, then a I left off last night. I went back to that scene on Earth, in the city street, and gave Mr 2008 Christmas Special, and then two hour-long Specials in 2009, most likely Easter Copper a credit card. It's handy to place props that you might use later, like the credit and Christmas Day. Then a third Special in 2010 should segue into a brand new Series card, like the forklift; it's easy to cut them if I don't use them, but their existence sort of Five, with a new production team. We've planned this for ages. I remember discussing of seeds them, and I start to play with their potential. it with Julie and David, in Woods Restaurant in Cardiff Bay, a few days before filming I set myself two new targets today: to get the meteoroids hitting by Page 23 - done! began on The Runaway Bride. The show, by 2009, will simply need a rest. We need to - and to reduce the whole script down from 50 pages. I got to 48. But preproduction

on Monday. IN TWO DAYS' TIME! The director - it's James Strong - needs to ¹² The Hutton Inquiry was a 2003-2004 judicial inquiry, chaired by Lord Mutton, into the circumstances surrounding the start work. I

have to work like hell this weekend.death of Dr David Kelly, an employee of the Ministry of Defence, in July 2003. Kelly had been named as the source of quotes

used by BBC journalist Andrew Gilligan, forming the basis of media reports that Tony Blair's Labour government had knowingly 'sexed up' a dossier on Iraq and weapons of mass destruction. The inquiry cleared the government of wrongdoing,

but the BBC was strongly criticised, leading to the resignation of both the Chairman and the Director-General of the BBC.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 3 JUNE 2007 02:24:48
GMT on Christmas Day. I'm sure it says so

somewhere in the BBC Charter.**RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S**

ARSE

a curious thing: Astrid plummets to her death; two pages later, the Doctor isMore! Lots!
About 11 pages! I've been building up to this Canyon sequence for
days. joshing about Midshipman Frame's first name;

another two pages, and the Queen isChrist, that's tiring. Writing action sequences is
exhausting. in a nightie and

curlers, running downstairs with two courtiers and a corgi! Back in

you said with regards to E4's Skins: 'It's the oddest hybrid of a drama and broadFROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. MONDAY 4 JUNE 20 07 02:14:51

GMT sitcom. Mind you, people say that about
my stuff.' Comedy and Drama (or Comedy**RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S**

ARSE

Tragedy - the more traditional division) are common bedfellows in a Russell TThere's more.
Not as many pages as I'd hoped. But I went back and seeded in Mr
Maxitane Davies script, but is it a mistake to think of

them as diametric opposites? Does the- now called Max Callisto - throughout. No longer sat in
his posh roped-off area in the genre 'comedy-drama' (or
'dramedy', I've heard it called) really exist outside of BBCEntertainment Lounge at the
beginning, I've put him instead onthe comms panels
and press releases and whatnot? Are there occasions

when you'd consider it unworkable towall-screens all over the ship, in a commercial for Max
Callisto Cruiseliners, playing on blur the line between
Comedy and Drama in this way? I mean, if you can progresspermanent loop. And I changed
Peth's name to Astrid. Peth is her surname now. I
never suddenly and speedily from heartbreak as Astrid

is killed, to a deliberately daft,liked the name Peth, I only came up with it quickly for that
treatment, and it's bugged me tangential cutaway gag... what
won't you do, Russell?every day since. Astrid' sounds more spacey, more like a futuristic
Doctor's companion.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. TUESDAY 5 JUNE 2007 13:09:56 GMTAstra was too obvious, I
thought.

CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSEFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 5 JUNE 2007 02:42:56

GMT Yes, I hate saying Comedy and Drama,
because it automatically assumes that Drama**RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S**

ARSE

Tragedy. Big, big mistake. Drama encompasses the whole range. But I believeAlmost finished.
About 13 pages today. That's good. All those random props are

paying passionately that Comedy and Tragedy exist alongside each other. No way are they off - the forklift truck, the teleport bracelets, the commercial. And Midshipman diametric opposites; they're right next to each other, and they overlap in a thousand ways. Queer as Folk Episode 3 is like a thesis on that. There's a huge comedy have to be major cuts. Anyway, you're not alone now, because I handed in these first 61 sex scene, which results in a slapstick fall off a window ledge, intercut with the horniest pages to the production team today, to start prep. Lordy God, it's real... threesome in the world, intercut with a drugs overdose in which a man dies. I chose to

I was going to bring in the Judoon at the end, wasn't I? Not enough time. Also, it'd just intercut Tragedy with Comedy and Sex. The whole world is compressed into that; the feel odd now, like they've walked in from another adventure. Too big. Too comic. The coexistence of all those things allocated Judoon costumes refurbishment money can go into some prosthetics for Max. Pause for a weird story. That overdose scene really happened to me, in my kitchen. We've allowed for ten Host, too, but I don't think we need more than six. That's good. with a man like that -- and I wrote it into the script. The existence of that scene was one

In other news... Peter Fincham walked into a meeting with Catherine Tate today, of the great engines of Queer as Folk. A week before filming, the location fell through, with loads of executives from Tiger Aspect Productions (a huge London indie) and and the production team said, 'Can we use your house?' Honest to God. So there's said, 'So you're going to be the new Doctor Who companion?' Noooo! Jaws dropped. a man, acting out what could have happened to me, but dying, in the place where it's secret out, all round London. Christ! actually happened. I can't tell you how that makes my head explode. Funny thing is,

The real reason this is bad is that the tabloid reports are going to be 'FREEMA I believed that coincidence until about a year ago, when I realised that the director,

McDougall, who was a truly mad genius, was so intent on accuracy that he SACKED!' with a vengeance, which isn't true; we've so many plans for her. I can't believe

have changed locations on purpose. I bet there was no 'other location'. It took it. After all these months of secrecy. Catherine is gutted. She'd told no one. Damn.

eight years to realise that. (They painted my house and redecorated, by the way. It's really that awful hippy colour.)

I have to write like that. Funny, sad, all at once. That's how life is. You can have

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

pratfall at a funeral. You can laugh so much that you choke to death. The Master is

YOU DO KILL KYLIE!!! And oh - you saved the Queen.¹³ Well, you couldn't kill her

and genuinely, drum-beatingly insane, and therefore can be funny as hell. Jackie

¹³ In this draft, Buckingham Palace is destroyed when the plummeting Titanic crashes to Earth, but the Queen escapes in the Tyler makes us laugh, but I knew that I'd uncover something sad at the heart of her. Her

nick of time.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
FOUR: INT. SPACESHIP			

sadness over her absent daughter is there as early as Aliens of London, but you don't really might neglect it a bit, because it's a tricky one to sell, but of course it's so clever. Stevenget to see it properly until Love & Monsters. Idiots will say, 'Ah, that character is developing is over at the St David's now, pissed. Paul Cornell is there, too, and said that he'd heardnow' - what, like you were going to play it all in the first 30 seconds?! - but that capacity from Kate Bush, because she loved his two Series Three episodes so much! Kate Bush!was always there. It had to be. Even in Rose, when Jackie is ostensibly 'funny', telling her How funny.daughter to get a job in the butcher's, Jackie is one of the things that's holding Rose back Anyway, I've no time off, because Torchwood is in crisis - one script down, blah,- and that's quite dark, at its heart. 'Funny' is hiding a lot of other stuff. blah, blah. That poor show lives in a state of crisis. But Voyage of the Damned has been

Many people hate that in my writing. Not just the fans, but also commissioners. well received, thank God. Julie loves it. Phil loves it. I think. I'm never sure, becauseTessa Ross at Channel 4, who axed the greenlit The Second Coming before it was picked they're just glad to get a working script. Of course I get feedback, I'll have any noteup by ITV, did so because she thought that my writing is essentially lightweight. going, although there hasn't been time for a proper notes session yet. But I'm happyNicola Shindler has warned me about that: she says there are a lot of people who don't with it. It's a sort of 7/10 script at the moment. It's kind of lame having Max as thetake my scripts seriously, because of the level of comedy. But I don't worry about that. villain, I suppose, but it's the only possible solution. It's not credible that one of theIt's how I write, it's me, and I'm not changing it. I think having a sense of humour survivors could go 'ha ha!' in a sudden reveal, and turn out to be part of the evil plot.is a powerful and human thing, it's one of our survival mechanisms, and it's never That's why I had to turn Max into a cyborg box, because the dramatic reveal of... adestroyed. Equally, a sense of humour can be cold, almost ruthless, but I've never *businessman! was too rubbish for words. Also, I loved the forklift once I'd planted it*found a single situation -- not my mother's death, not my overdose, not anything -- in on, ooh, whichever draft, but to have Astrid use that against a human Max would havewhich something funny hasn't happened. That's why I think it's so, so wrong to write been ridiculously violent.with a Comedy or Tragedy label in your head. Life isn't like that. Indeed, I think Mine The real editing will come with the expense. It's a nightmare. Ed Thomas has about, I*All Mine went wrong because I actually thought, I'll make this funny. Conversely, I* don't know, 20,000 to 30,000 to spend on a Christmas Special. I saw him just now attook Bob & Rose incredibly seriously, and won Comedy Writer of the Year for it! the licensees' dinner. He said, 'I've costed up to Page 66, and it's already 87,000!' That's

Anyway, more script. I've finished. It feels okay. just what I didn't want to hear. Oh well, we'll think of something.

I'm off to London now. It's the Jekyll launch. It's Steven Moffat's new drama for the BBC. I can't wait to see it. I had to get up early and work like hell to finish this script, all so I can have a night out. In London Town!

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 7 JUNE 2007 22:30:36 GMT

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

You've finished! What's been the early feedback? Do you even get feedback? From Julie? From Phil? Do you take notice of it? Are you back in Cardiff now? How was London? How was Jekyll?. Any good? All these questions!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 8 JUNE 20 07 01:26:56 GMT

RE: CHARLIE HUNNAM'S ARSE

I'm back in Cardiff. In fact, I've just got in from the BBC Worldwide Licensees' Dinner, at the St David's Hotel. I can see them all from my window, still dancing. It's a jamboree junket for all the Doctor Who, Torchwood and Sarah Jane merchandise licensees - over 200 of them! I had to talk to the man who makes the Frubes. I wanted to say, 'My friend said his flatmate was eating Martha Jones!' But I didn't. Frubes Man said they're a resounding success. Flying off the shelves, he said. Imagine being Frubes Man! I'm knackered from smiling. Christ, it's exhausting.

Now, Jekyll was wonderful. I loved it. It's well worth watching. I fear that the BBC

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE REWRITER'S TALE

In which Buckingham Palace is saved,
Kylie plays gooseberry, and Kasabian
narrowly avoid sex in a tent

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 15 JUNE 2007 17:19:55 GMT

FW: MEETING NOTES

We had a 4.X script meeting today. Here, for the record, are the notes from the script editor, Brian Minchin:

DOCTOR WHO 4.X DRAFT ONE: NOTES

Dear Russell,

Thank you again for such a lovely meeting. There are very few notes on such a wonderful script. I've summarised this morning's discussion below:

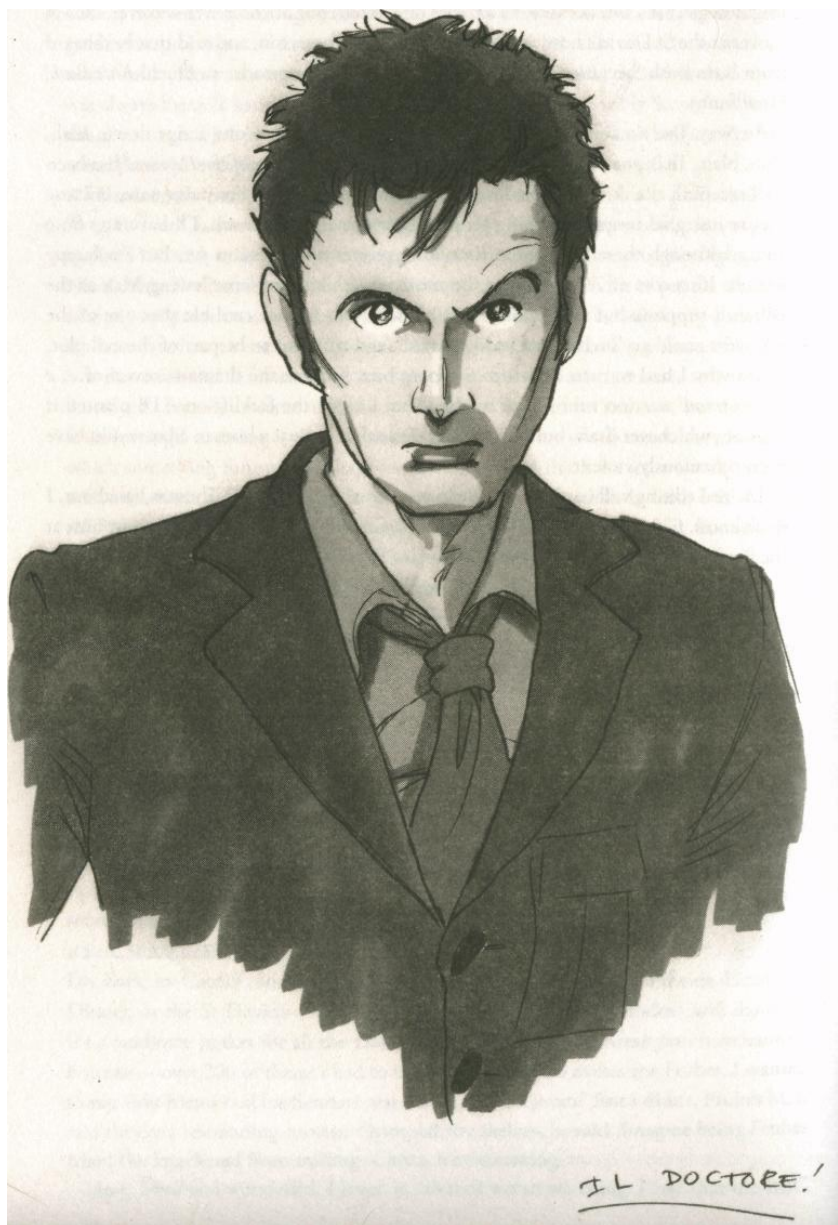
BUILDING UP THE ROLE OF ASTRID

Finding more time with Astrid and the Doctor. We should almost believe that she could be the next companion. If possible, more moments when we learn more about Astrid: her history, her family, her perception of the Doctor.

Astrid kissing the Doctor.

We talked about everyone being a bit in love with Astrid, and that it would be great to have a moment between her and Mr Copper.

Making more of the moment when Astrid decides to follow the Doctor to



@yuliasha

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FIVE: THE REWRITER'S TALE

Deck 31.'

if you know that, the compliments are useless. But they're good notes. Though,

Spelling out her sacrifice at the end: she's doing something that the Doctor as you say, I kicked out any that weren't good. I'm trying to think of an example...

wouldn't do in killing Max.² Pushing her heroism: Astrid doesn't want to go over

I remember, a tiny thing: someone suggested that the Doctor and Astrid, in Scene should look at each other as they pass for the first time. Duh! Stupid note. The the edge with Max, but she needs to keep her foot on the pedal/hold onto the joy of that passing is that they don't acknowledge each other; the audience gear stick. Making this sequence explicit so that we understand why she can't more than the characters do.

leap off the forklift before it propels her into space.

a way, with Kylie cast (provisionally), I relaxed slightly with Astrid and didn't hard enough at her, because I thought that the sheer iconic imagery of her casting

MAX CAPRICORN

Should the Doctor have a plan in mind when he's confronting Max?

enough. I'm a fool. I can see that now, and I'm happy to bump up her part. Also, you know how a character is going to end, sometimes that can rob them of energy. I

Also, we discussed whether there is a way to build up Max before we see him,

off other writers for this, then go and make the same mistake myself. Since I knew but didn't have any useful thoughts.

the start that Astrid would die, there's an ever so slight indifference towards her.

feels as though any Astrid Could Be A Companion scene is false. I've got to fight

LOCATION CHANGES

Making Astrid more of a hero, though? Unfortunately, that's bugged -- because

The Titanic Reception is CUT. All action from these scenes will be relocated to

we are offering Mr Copper to Dennis Hopper. If Dennis Hopper should, in a
the Entertainment Lounge, corridors, and Deck.

world, accept the part, we'll have a similar set of notes - doubtless from his agent

Please note that ALL corridors should be shot in ONE corridor location,
but -- asking for Mr Copper to be
bumped up further in the heroic stakes. This is one of

redressed/with different
lighting.

problems of casting before writing: it starts to affect the production. In fact, when

explained this to Julie, she said, 'I wish you'd told me, because then we wouldn't
have

COSTUME

AND

MAKE-

UP

the bloody script to Dennis!' Julie wants Astrid absolutely central, quite rightly.

In order to signify that all the guests on board are 'alien', each character has
a Should the Doctor have a plan in
mind when confronting Max? That's a great idea,

small bindi on their forehead. The Stewards will be in naval
costumes. but I can't imagine
what it is. The Doctor is weak in those scenes, I've compensated

verbiage, and I've no idea how to fix it. But I'm confident I'll think of something.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 16 JUNE 2007
12:50:34 GMT

And building up
Max before we see him? That's tricky. It's a slight disappointment as

RE:

FW:

MEETING

NOTES

unveils himself, I admitted as much in my e-mails to you, but the Big Reveal can't

Are you nodding in agreement at the meeting notes, or shaking your head in disgust? Or be anyone else in the cast. If that scene were the absolute climax, I'd have to rethink,

did you kick out any note that you didn't agree with during the meeting? (And Brian's but we still have the plunging Titanic - the proper, adrenalin-filled climax - to come.

opening paragraph -- is that how all notes from script editors begin? Are they told to I think we have to live with it. But I'll keep thinking. Often, with things like that, you

do that? Or do some notes to writers start with: 'Thanks for nothing, you talentless realise the solution... in 12 months' time!

bastard. Your script was a terrible piece of rubbish. Here is the first instalment of Also, Phil tapped into something that I've worried about from the start: the passengers

notes!...?) Also, Ed must have costed the whole script by now, so what's the damage? on the Titanic are going to look human, like the Titanic has time-travelled from 1912

something, or like humans from the future have time-travelled back for a laugh.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 18 JUNE 2007 14:21:53 GMT It doesn't matter how many times you say that they're from the planet Sto; it's the

RE: **FW:** **MEETING NOTES**

that matter, and this looks like a bunch of humans partying. I suggested that

Script editors are trained to write an opening paragraph like that, with compliments, everyone wears bindis. It's all that I could think of. We can't afford alien prosthetics on

on any set of notes, on any show. It's polite and gets things off to an agreeable start. Of every single extra. I'll try to write it into the dialogue somehow. If we'd a huge budget,

would have gills.

1The Host Containment Cells are on Deck31. This is where the Doctor discovers an indestructible 'Omnistate Impact Chamber' hiding The script has been costed - and Ed reckons that we're 45,000 over budget! This

Max Capricorn, now a cyborg - a severed head sticking out of a metal box (five feet tall, three feet wide), laced with tubes and blinking

with computer panels, but driven by big industrial wheels; it's a mobile life-support system. is terrifying. This is major. Cutting the Reception will only lose us about 10,000, so

2 Astrid kills the 'Max-Box' - and herself - by ramming it with the forklift truck, and pushing it down a shaft into the Titanic's

35,000 has to be found. We won't have all the answers for the next draft, so

engines.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FIVE: THE REWRITER'S TALE

I'll just rewrite as is and we'll come back to it. We've about three weeks to sort it all out, but we've never been faced with such an overspend from the Design Department.

CUTBACKS_{This} is

serious.

is Russell's reply to Phil Collinson's e-mail about the Design

cutbacks. 'I was officially sulking,' recalls Russell, 'because IFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 18 JUNE 2007 23:42:15 GMT had to make so many cuts.

Every time Julie or Phil phoned me up, I was all**RE: FW: MEETING**

NOTES

and clipped. "Yeah. Fine. Okay. Bye." What a child! But iTonight, I got told that 4.X has 197 days of CGI FX too many!3 It's only supposed to couldn't help it. And then

I e-mailed them, and was all agreeable and fullhave about 350 in total -- and that's big -- so I'm more than 50 per cent over. Problem of exclamations! Like! This!

That reinforces the sulking, because they knowis, The Mill is so busy, they've taken a fortnight to work this out. But I have to move those exclamations ring false. How

ridiculous -- especially since know fullon fast, not wait for number-crunching. I'm frozen with terror at the amount of time well that they're out there, banging the

phones, scrimping and savingI have to write 4.1, and polish Gareth Roberts' Agatha Christie script, Keith Temple's every last penny for me.,Ood script and

James Moran's Pompeii script. It looks like I have about four weeks to

do all

that!

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: PHIL COLLINSON, DATE: TUESDAY 19 JUNE 2007 18:08:44 GMT

So. Big cuts to 4.X. Poor old Buckingham Palace has to go. We need to convert the **RE: EP. X**cost of building -- and destroying - a

scale model into money for The Mill. I might keep » **Hi**

Russell,the flagpole smashing through the window of the Titanic, because that makes me laugh,

Sorry to bombard you, but I've just had a budget meeting with Ed. We have our workthough Ed's department is 45,000 over, so, um, I might not. Plus, I've just worked out cut out, and all of these are just suggestions,

but I wonder if we could make some cutsa new end sequence for Astrid -- her death isn't very sad at the moment, is it? - which **and trims,**

and we discussed the following possibilities: «requires even more FX, at least another eight shots or so. When I described the new

ending to Julie -- it's lovely, sentimental, Christmassy - she said, 'Well, we've got to

keep Don't worry, Phil, it must be done.that!' But how are
we going to find the
money? » Deck

22 has gone altogether, which is a good saving.1 We left some money to

windows into the Entertainment Lounge, but how many do you think weFROM: BENJAMIN
COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE 2007 06:38:12
GMT **need? «RE: FW: MEETING NOTES**

I'm off to the Glastonbury Festival this afternoon, so I'll be without e-mail access for
a I could make do with a single porthole.few days. (Five
nights in a tent - bliss!) Best of luck with the FX cuts and Astrid's
new » **The Bridge. At the moment, this set is**

budgeted to be built on a rostrum. Adeath. Can I ask, before I go, is it preferable
for a writer to edit his or her own work, **good saving**
could be had if we build the main set on the ground instead, but thendo you think, or
for a script editor to do it? A writer knows their script better
than **build a small section -- say, a six-foot-square**
corner -- on a rostrum, and shoot theanyone, but a script editor provides an alternative eye
and a fresh perspective. **Host/Doctor**
breakthrough, in medium close-up, on that.' We could cheat a way of

a shot with Frame and the ship's wheel in the foreground, so that it feels likeFROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 20 JUNE 2007 08:45:14
GMT **the same set, and then close-up shots**
of the Doctor climbing out. We'd build bothRE: FW: MEETING
NOTES

side by side, and match the main set to the breakaway one for all action after theScript
editing. An editor is vital. Everyone should have one. You can't always
edit **breakthrough. It'll save us a good few**
grand, «something yourself; you need that fresh pair of eyes. (Not a friend. Or your mum.
That's

no good.) The 'second death' that I'm about to write for Astrid seems absolutely
intrinsic, Of course that'll work. Simple!and it's weird to
think that I didn't put it there in the first place. I felt dissatisfied
with » **Host Containment Cells. That's a big**
build, to construct individual cells as scripted.the original, but only in a
vague, shoulder-shrugging way. I could ignore that
nagging **Could we rethink this and have a kind of**
robot deactivation area - an industrial space,

big console, some kind of operating table in the centre, with a robot on, and other³ Post-
production company The Mill is responsible for the (computer-generated) visual effects on Doctor Who, Torchwood and

The Sarah Jane Adventures. An FX day equals a day's work for one person at The Mill. Theoretically, if The Mill had 350
FX 1 The setting for Scene 4, Deck 22 was 'Deck 15' In the original draft.days allocated and 350 people working on

Doctor Who, they could finish an episode in a day,' explains Russell. 'Except it's not 2 *Midshipman Frame is trapped on the*
*Bridge. From Deck 31 the Doctor flies up through the gutted Titanic, carried by two*quite literal. The Mill's definition of a day must

include... well, payment for talent, genius, planning and all that;
Host raise their arms, fists clenched, and punch through the floor of the Bridge,

Host, soaring higher and higher... as both

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FIVE: THE REWRITER'S TALE

robots standing against the wall but 'plumbed in? This would mean we could find an Here's the revised 4.X for you to read on your return. It's still over-budget. I haven't industrial-type location, and avoid big construction costs. The console -- or one of the cut enough FX shots. More changes to come, I suspect. Maybe we'll have to reconsider walls -- could part to reveal Max.

« that whole forklift death, because that's eating into our budget hugely. Still, I'm pleased

the new Buckingham Palace sequence and Astrid's second farewell.. 5Lovely!

» Do we ever go back to the Entertainment Lounge after the meteoroid crash? It'll

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T

DAVIES, TUESDAY 26 JUNE 2007 18:20:55 GMT

save us money if we don't have to redress this room. If you cut the big shot as the RE: 4.X DRAFT TWO meteoroid rips through, will you still keep Sc.44/2 (people consumed by flame), I'm back from Glastonbury. I spent most of it stuck in the mud (I think some folk are Sc.46/1 (stuntman falling over balcony), Sc.46/2 and Sc.46/3 (handsome man and still there, stuck fast), but I had the most awesome time. You'll be saddened to hear woman's death), and Sc.51/1 (man tumbles through space)? 3 « that I didn't have sex with Kasabian. (Would you, though? Really?! It'd be like making

with Topman's entire autumn range. Plus, you'd get stubble rash.) 44/2 is gone. 46/1 is gone. 46/2 and 46/3 are gone. In fact, I'd better cut 51/1, too.

I returned from The Mudbath to find an invite to the 4.X read-through next Monday, This does mean I have to keep the Chief Steward's death in full, or the meteoroids hit in London. Cheers for that, Russell, since I'm sure you had something to do with it. the Titanic and we see no one die. No one! I've just read the revised 4.X, and I almost prefer the new version of the Buckingham

gag, though not quite. But Astrid's second death is stunning. (Invisible Ben isn't 3 Scene designations are from The MiH's FX list, so 44/2 means Scene 44, FX Shot 2, and so forth. supposed to tell you things like that, is he? Oh well!)

you'd started, you wrote 4.X at a fair lick. Barring the occasional day or so

voice. All writers do. It took a proper meeting with others to express that dissatisfaction. when not much happened, you rattled

off the thing pretty damn fast. You started at

Even a stray remark can make all the difference: just chatting before the meeting, Brian midnight on 15 May and finished Draft One on 5 June, just three weeks later. That's

Minchin said, 'I didn't expect Astrid to die. I thought the teleport bracelet would save speedy. Is that a necessity of your workload? Would you have liked longer? If you'd had

her.'⁴ I thought, ah ha! I'd forgotten that she was even wearing it. Instantly, I knew an extra week, or a month, would you have filled it constructively, do you think? And

what to do. I didn't say anything during the meeting, I just agreed with the general have you always written that quickly?

dissatisfaction and promised to fix it, knowing full well what I was going to do...

You're dealing here with a script that works, essentially, but the process of writing

TUESDAY 26 JUNE 2007 23:13:50 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,

isn't an exact science. It's imprecise, moody and instinctive, so you need people to keep

RE: 4.X DRAFT TWO

you on track and remind you why you're writing in the first place. Of course, finding A read-through with Kylie Minogue! Marvellous, isn't it? She's going to watch Last of

the right people is key. The industry is full of rubbish script editors. The bad ones are *the Time Lords on Saturday with David. Madder and madder! And we've cast Clive*

vandals. They don't just destroy scripts; they destroy writers. It takes a lot of work when Swift as Mr Copper. That's brilliant! (Dennis Hopper, it turned out, isn't available for

you're young, or starting out, to survive those people. Well, to even recognise them in *that many days.*) *And Geoffrey Palmer is Captain Hardaker, which is glorious. Also,*

the first place. That's hard work.

Tovey as Midshipman Frame, which is my favourite casting of the lot, because

going to be huge, that man. He's amazing. I think I'd make him the Eleventh

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 22 JUNE 2007 23:48:54 GMT

**4.X
TWO**

DRAFT

Russel

love that new Astrid ending. Pure sentiment. Pure Disney. It would be way too

I've been watching the Glastonbury coverage on BBC Three. Isn't Amy Winehouse sentimental if she weren't dead, but since she still cops it, well, I reckon it's grand. I'm

stunning? I hope you're having a good time. I eagerly await tales of drugs and sex. In a gutted about Buckingham Palace, though. Always will be. It's a big set-up for a gag

tent. With Kasabian. I just got a text off John Simm -- he's there, too. And so is Freema. that never happens. We've almost reached an FX compromise: lost a few more shots,

kept Astrid's death and all the major stuff. I think we've about 40 more FX days to

Have you met up? The Master could have hunted down Martha Jones at Glastonbury!

With you watching!
version, the Titanic misses Buckingham Palace by an inch, sailing overhead and back into space. The Doctor uses

settings on the ship's teleport to bring back Astrid - for her 'second farewell' - but the system is too damaged, > ne

as just 'an echo, with the ghost of consciousness'. They kiss, then the Doctor lets Astrid go: she turns to 'dust and

4 Astrid uses one of the ship's teleport bracelets to follow the Doctor down to Deck 31. She's still wearing it when she plummets to

away into space.

her death.

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you often rewrite the script as a result of the read-through?«FROM: RUSSELL T

DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE 2007 22:39:01 GMT

That's what

they're for - for performance and timing, but also to make the scriptRE: 4.X DRAFT TWO

better. That's why

a Pink Draft is issued after a read-through. The pink pages are anyIt's been another bastard of a day. We realised... well, to fill you in, when David finishes pages that have been revised at all. At a Doctor Who read-through, we all scribble downSeries Four, he's off to the Royal Shakespeare Company to play Hamlet. Wow! (Equally, notes. Small performance things - tone and pitch, don't shout this, be quiet with that,*bah! I've never been able to sit through Hamlet. Have you?*) *Oh, and that's very, very top* emphasise that gag - but also proper drama notes. Why is she so cross? Can we explainsecret. Don't even let David know that you know. Anyway, we realised today that the why he runs? Do we even need that scene? Etc.RSC needs to announce David's casting in September, which, because of the dates, will »Heavily, ever?«immediately make it obvious that there won't be a Series Five with him in 2009. The If need be. I sat in the read-through of The Grand Series Two, Episode 1, and realisedsecret will be out. Heaven knows what we're going to do. I d got a major plot wrong. We were axing two main characters, so I wrote them having

an

affair that would lead to their exit in Episode 4. But I realised, sitting in the read-

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 29 JUNE 2007 22:55:31

GMTHrough, that it was just crap. Wrong actors, wrong characters, wrong story. In the

RE: 4.X DRAFT TWO

meeting

afterwards, I chucked it out - and it was about 50 per cent of the script. Not

David's doing Hamlet'. Wow indeed. No bah! from me. He'll be magnificent. only that, but the next three scripts, with the characters in mid-affair, were lined up

to be

shot. They all had to be rewritten. It had to be done, overnight! It doesn't matter

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 2 JULY 2007 21:33:01 GMT

how

much work it is; there's no point in filming a mistake.

THE

READ-

THROUGH

»should

the script shift to fit the actor, or is it the actors job to fit the script?«

Wasn't today's read-through AMAZING? Can you believe Kylie, walking around, You cast someone to fit the script; lines and emphasis can change. Unfortunately,

introducing herself to everyone?

a

lot of scripts are loose and vague, therefore the actor has too many options, or no

I always thought, in my naivety, that read-throughs were for the actors' and directors' options, so the performance swings away from the script, the director swings away

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
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from the actors, and... oh, a mess. That's bad TV drama. Actually, that's just ordinary dying to write that for years. In fact, Evil Sat Nav was in the first draft of The Runaway

TV drama. The sheer not-quite-ness of it all.
Bride, on board the speeding taxi, with the Empress of Racnoss using it as her eyes

and ears on Earth - though I junked that idea before I even delivered the script. Now

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2007 00:21:34 GMT
someone else gets it. Damn.

RE: THE READ-THROUGH
Also, we cast Max today: George Costigan. It was almost on the cards for Dennis

The BBC has just announced Catherine Tate's casting in Series Four, in a press release Hopper to be Max, because it's fewer days on set than Mr Copper, but we just ran out

issued at midnight. Eh?! Why announce it this soon? Mind you, the internet is going of time. He had the script and apparently was willing, he's even in the country now,

into meltdown.
but we didn't hear back (it's hard to nag American agents), and we needed Max for a

prosthetic fitting on Wednesday, so it all fell through. But George Costigan is perfect.

PRAC FX: SPARKS & SMOKE from BEN's computer.

That's about it, update-wise. Oh, except I e-mailed Julie today saying:

It almost goes without saying, but... in the climax to Series Four, with Donna, and

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 JULY 2007 01:52:45 GMT
Martha, and Rose, and Sarah Jane, and Captain Jack, all battling away to save the

RE: THE READ-THROUGH
Doctor... I suppose you'd want a mysterious shimmer of blue Stardust to make an

The Sun got wind of Catherine Tate, so we've fought back, for once, and

spiked their appearance at some point, wouldn't you? She e-mailed back with an 'OH YES!' So

exclusive by releasing Catherine's name to everyone. Ha! But there's worse to come. that's a laugh.

The Daily Mail has got wind of David's booking as Hamlet. We're battenning down the hatches. None of us is quite sure what to say. In amongst all this, Julie and I reflected

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 8 JULY 2007 21:30:00 GMT

with horror today that we haven't been able to tell the staff what's going to happen

JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE

after Series Four. People who have moved to Cardiff, with mortgages and everything. It's not often that I'm sat in a Cardiff bar with Spike from Buffy, and Kylie Minogue

It's a bloody hurricane. Of our own making. I can't imagine another show with this walks in!6 This city is now, officially, insane. And James Marsters is the sexiest bastard

trajectory or
adrenalin. alive, much more
so than he is on screen. As straight as the day is long, and yet every

Here's a quick update on everything else: in the next 17 days, I have to rewrite single conversation came back to sex with him. I wasn't complaining. For all that, I'm

Keith's script, plus Gareth's, plus James's, which then gives me eight days to write

4.1. back in the flat now, rewriting Planet of the Ood...

This is impossible. It's a bloody mess this year; we are so behind. I don't know why that is. Maybe I'm slowing down. Being ground down? I feel sick with worry.

When

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SUNDAY 8 JULY 2007 21:59:33 GMT

I slow down, the whole engine slows down, the whole Doctor Who factory. I know,

RE: JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE

for example, that I'm not bullying anyone about the other writers' deadlines, when Kylie Minogue playing gooseberry. Who'd have thought it?

I should be. It's all my fault. Realising that makes me feel more sick, which then, I How are the Ood coming along?

suspect, slows me down further. Vicious circle.

On a more positive note, I had a script meeting with Gareth after the read-through,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN C OOK, SUNDAY 8 JULY 2007 22:34:07 GMT

so he can rewrite as much of his episode as possible while I'm rewriting Keiths - and

RE: JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE

Gareth was brilliant. He learns, and learns, and learns. We went in with the biggest The Ood are... late. Bloody Ood. Must keep going, though, because



problem: why is Agatha Christie caught up in a murder mystery? Isn't that a bit of a I'm rewriting Agatha next week. She's fighting a giant wasp. We really coincidence? Agatha's sheer presence had to become part of the plot. I said, 'We're not couldn't think what sort of enemy she should fight. Dickens? Ghosts. leaving this room until we solve this, even if we're here for ever.' We'd cracked it within Shakespeare? Witches. But Agatha...? Then Gareth came up with a wasp - ten minutes. 'Hang on,' we said, 'if we make one of the characters a Christie fan and I remembered the old paperback cover of Death in the Clouds, they're reading a Christie novel as the alien activates... then the alien mentally inherits which has a plane being attacked by a symbolically giant wasp. 'That'll the murder mystery as a template and bases its actions on that!' Problem solved. do,' we said. Our most tenuous link yet.

And then Helen Raynor came in to discuss her two-part Sontaran adventure. I had to give away one of my favourite ideas ever: Evil Cars! With Evil Sat Nav! I've been 6 American actor James Marsters, best known as Spike in Buffy the Vampire Slayer and its spin-off series Angel, was in

Cardiff

to film three episodes of Torchwood Series Two, in which he plays Captain John Hart, a rogue Time Agent.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
FIVE: THE REWRITER'S TALE			

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 9 JULY 2007 07:49:44 GMT
 FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 8 JULY 2007 22:49:04 GMT

JAMES MARSTERS' ARSERE: JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE

Guardian says you're the fifteenth most powerful player in the media industry. A Giant Wasp? I'll be happy so long as you're a posh butler, a country house,

have to question the choice of the word 'player', don't you?) You're up from and someone murdered by a poisoned dart. Oh, and Agatha should be played by

28 last year. You're the highest-ranking TV producer on the list. Well done! Madonna.

You're making a habit of these polls, aren't you?

When you get a moment, can you explain the 'rewriting' process on Doctor What Do
 you ever worry about treading on other writers'
 toes?
 FROM: RUSSELL T
 DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 9 JULY 2007 08:30:09 GMT

JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 8 JULY 2007
 23:05:56 GMT

gives me a year to murder 14 people. It can be done. **RE: JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE**

No dart, damn it. But a poisoned sting - that's close! And death by lead piping,
 just
 FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES,
 MONDAY 9 JULY 2007 08:45:55 GMT because that's so irresistible. (Donna: 'Who uses lead
 piping?!') How we're going to get **RE: JAMES
 MARSTERS' ARSE** a Giant Wasp -- a Vespiform, to be precise -- to wield a piece of lead piping
 is going to I wondered why you were so hung up on
 lead piping the other night. make for a fun Tone Meeting. 7

Rewriting? I write the final draft of almost all scripts - except Steven
 Moffat's,
 FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T
 DAVIES, TUESDAY 10 JULY 2007 10:20:48 GMT Matthew Graham's, Chris Chibnall's and Stephen
 Greenhorn's - and that draft **RE: JAMES
 MARSTERS' ARSE** becomes the Shooting Script. I might change at least 30 per cent of the
 material, often Have you seen yesterday's rushes yet?
 How's the Strut looking? Can you explain why 60 per cent, sometimes almost 100 per cent. I
 go over every line of dialogue, either it's
 important, as showrunner, that you view each day's rushes? adding new stuff or refining

what's there; sometimes that means enhancing a line that

the original writer hasn't realised is good. I'll bring out themes, punch up moments,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 JULY 2007 11:30:24 GMT
add signature dialogue, clarify stage directions and make cuts. To every single scene, if

RE: JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE need be. Usually, the basic shape remains intact, but sometimes I'll invent brand new

The rushes are wonderful. The Strut is an amazing set. I watch the rushes to correct characters and subplots... while at the same time remaining faithful to the original

things, if they can be corrected in time; sometimes it's too late. For example, Foonwriter. I'll even impersonate

them. has

a daft hairstyle -- but it's too late to change, because of continuity, so there it

Sometimes, yes, this does mean treading on other writers' toes. I'm sure some of them is. In extreme circumstances (if she were the lead), I could demand for it to be re-

think of it as vandalism. Equally, to be fair, others are very grateful. But my job is to get shot, but not in this instance. It can be toned down, though. Babs Southcott can do

the Best Possible Script on screen, even if that means stampeding over someone. The anything! We can get away with it, because Foon is a big, funny character. She can

viewer at home doesn't care who wrote it; they just want it to be good. My job is to make support big hair. You can even argue, when Morvin dies, the funny hair is marvellously

it as good as it can be. Take no prisoners! And it's got to be done fast, so I haven't time to contradictory; she's a tragedy in clown's clothes, which has a nice sort of resonance.

pussyfoot around, transplanting lines of dialogue, delicately. Even interesting stuff has to Mainly, I'm looking at the rushes for tone. The pitch of it. The height. The broadness.

go sometimes, because I can only find room for myself by shifting back all the furniture, The speed. The precision. For example, the moment they arrive on the Strut is too

making it my own. This is a multi-million quid show that has to be the absolute best it hysterical. 'Look! Big drop! Eek! Oh no!' It's all full-pitch. When Morvin falls to his

can

be.

the pitch has nowhere to go. They're already squealing, so there's no contrast. That

me to a note that I'd never given James until now, because it hadn't occurred to me:

Hey, filming on 4.X starts tomorrow. The first of three days on the Strut.8 That's in
make it too hysterical. Disaster movies thrive on that grim tone, that quiet fear,
at the deep end.

bravery in the face of death, small people in big events, not screaming and shouting.

are blunter notes, too. Debbie Chazen is wonderful. More of her, please. Favour

Gray O'Brien (Rickston)'s accent is brilliant. He's Scottish playing posh. Design,

7 Tone Meetings are where the heads of departments, the producers and the director, gather to work
out, scene by scene, how the

episode can be
made.

and Make-Up have done a brilliant job... so I pass on the praise. Those teams

8 The Strut is a jagged and broken bridge across a huge canyon, where many of the TVron/c's floors
have fallen through as a

result of the meteoroid collision. The Doctor, Astrid. Rickston, Bannakaffalatta. Morvin and Foon must
make their way across:

the last three don't make it.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FIVE: THE REWRITER'S TALE

work so hard and they love to hear that we're happy. Everyone is overworked - and people like Louise Page worry so much, she needs that text to say thank you. And me

OF THE OOD

is Russell's e-mail to his fellow producers (including Susie Liggat, and Julie text all the lead actors - they need it and deserve it. It's a blizzard of texts from

five episodes of Series Four, with Phil Collinson becoming execmidday onwards.

those episodes) and script editor Ltndsey Alford, accompanying his

Best of all, watching rushes does me good, because when I see them standing there,

rewrite of Planet of the Ood...dirty, grimy, scared, the Time Lord, the pop star, the fat couple, the old man, the

businessman, the red conker, all looking down at the terrible drop, with the viewer
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TO: SUSIE LIGGAT; PHIL COLLINSON; JULIE GARDNER; LINDSEY ALFORD CC:

COOK, TUESDAY to JULY 2007 04:09:40 GMTknowing - oh, just knowing - that some of them will die, it makes me think, really,

powerfully: I love this episode. My confidence in this script is
EP 4.2

we go. Finished. I haven't had time to check for typos and stuff, but...FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 10 JULY 2007 12:01:07

Remember I promised you no new locations, Susie? But then Mr Halpen had toRE: JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE

and mention a cinema., so now there's a cinema, and an Ood attack within theSo is it only during filming - and afterwards - that tone can be assessed properly?

cinema.1 Ideally, it's one of those posh press-launch cinemas, but do they even exist inHow far, really, can tone be established at the scripting stage? Or at the Tone Meeting? Cardiff? It could always be a real cinema, one of the smaller ones, but I worry that it'sAnd how does a TV show, as opposed to any individual episode, find its overarching going to look like we filmed in the local Odeon. Not very Forty-Second Century! Buttone? Its voice? New Doctor Who found it within

go

five minutes, whereas Torchwood... it's worth trying.
We've the same old sets revolving around this story, so it makes awell, that show may have
found its voice, but it's hard to tell, because it keeps
losing nice change - and great for kids, to imagine monsters
romping through a cinema.it. In the opening five minutes of your Torchwood episode, the
Series One opener, a

Mr Hsplen ts Chief Executive of the Cod-Sphere, which markets and selfs Ood to the galaxy in the Forty-Second
Century,character uses the f-word - and it really jarred, I thought. It stuck out, sorely. It
felt The cinema is the setting for a scene where Ood kiil a visiting party of sales
reps. Although this scene makes the transmittedwrong. Like watching K-9 hump a
lamppost.9 episode,
the location has been altered to a less costly Saies Reception Room.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 JULY 2007 13:11:24
GMT to me, 'How are we going to do the red
eyes?' Red? Red?! I spent months going, 'Red??RE: JAMES MARSTERS'
ARSE

script never said red, anywhere, but people thought instinctively that devil = red.Above all,
tone comes from the script. (I would say that!) You get 57 dozen
people

A natural assumption, but wrong. Even having
hammered home 'white', the FX guysworking on a drama, at key stages, and they all wander
off. No, it's not fair to call it went off and came back with...
green cats-eyes! I had to keep saying, 'No, no, no,' untilwandering, because they're creative
people, they're employed to use their imaginations, I sat
down with a pen and paper and drew exactly what we needed. It worked. It wasbut everyone
creates in a slightly different way, sometimes in a radically different
way.

a fantasy element, and I was the only person on that
team who really knew his fantasy,The director, the producer, the design teams, etc, should be
interpreting the show in

from TV sci-fi to B Movies to the
best that cinema has to offer. I know what looks tackythe same way, so the script should
convey the tone in every adjective, in the layout of and
what looks creepy. All those years of watching sci-fi pay off. And deciding that fineits pages,
in the names of its characters; everything should transmit the tone. I
mean,

line, deciding why red and green are bad and white
is good, that's a judgement call.if Rose Tyler had been called Ace', what would the design
teams have thought? Street-

That's tone.smart, tough,
DMs, rough mother, nasty flat, etc. From one word, the tone starts
to

Of course, that's a tiny example, but that's what
we're talking about, a whole string ofgo wrong. All the smaller stuff- the words, the names,
the style - conspire together to tiny examples, which gather
together to form the whole. If it's not controlled, you endmake a show that works, or a show
that doesn't. up with a

mess. To take Skins as another example - they did get the tone right, bang

Even then, it's amazing how often the script is forgotten. The Second Coming
had on, spectacularly right... in their trailers. They were
fantastic, weren't they? You've saiddevil-possessed people and the script said, specifically,
that they have 'tiny white glints of so yourself. It looked like it

The

was going to be the most mind-blowing drama, because oflight in their eyes'. Then you bring 57 dozen more imaginations on board, and everyone those images - wild, feral, sexy, new. If the drama had looked like the trails, it wouldbut everyone who read that script - the producer, the exec, the channel, everyone - said have been magnificent. A lot of people worked very hard on that series, I'm sure, but I

think the tone was controlled enough. I'm lucky in that I'm given the authority⁹ The Doctor's robot dog K-9 debuted in 1977 Doctor Who serial The Invisible Enemy, remained with the show until 1981, and returned, alongside Sarah Jane Smith, in Doctor Who 2.3. to control. I'm 6'6", loud, compulsive, pedantic, deliberately gregarious, and I get my

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
FIVE: THE REWRITER'S TALE

point across. I describe my job as 'transmitting'. You have to transmit all the time what the path that led Bryan to Skins. He really is amazing, and Skins' uncertain tone just this show is. To do that, you can't talk too much about the vague concept of the show; means that he's stumbled slightly on the first step. And stumbled bravely. Like you, I you have to talk about the cutlery, the sound effects, the colour of that light in the am looking forward to Series Two, despite Series One's shortcomings - so Skins is far background, and what sort of jeans Martha is wearing. from a failure.

Then again... my first Torchwood! Yes, I agree, I'd take out that f-word now. It was But hey, I loved your Torchwood criticism. Invisible Ben does make me laugh: I'm trying to set a tone. It was saying, 'Go away kids' - as if that ever works! Swearing rarely telling you all sorts of things and you might be thinking, blimey, or yeuch, or you feels natural on TV. There's still so little of it on that the words stand out artificially. When *bastard, and yet you have to stay invisible. You're like Rose and her dad sneaking into* I hear a swear word on telly, I look at my watch. I think, oh, 20-past-nine. It takes me the Cyberfactory in The Age of Steel: give yourself away and... well, you'll be taken right out of the scene. It needs to be judged carefully. It's hard to imagine Queer as Folk to the Cybercontroller and given plenty of time to destroy him. Never got that quite without it -- it's part of the energy -- but I won't do it again on Torchwood. I don't think it right, did we? But when you describe Torchwood's failure of voice - which is my fault, sits well with sci-fi. (Why didn't I remember that when I was Torchwood in? Trying too I suppose, though they're all working hard to fix it for Series Two - then I sort of knowhard, I suppose.) Someone used the f-word in the first episode of Bob & Rose, and Paul where we stand, and can go further. Abbott told me to take it out. He was so right. Such a delicate word, it jarred.

See? You never learn.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 JULY 2007 13:43:20 GMT

RE: JAMES MARSTERS' ARSE

I've been thinking. That last e-mail -- a lot of it was crap, the tone stuff. It was based on the assumption that the script is good, and then gets ballsed up by various levels of creativity. It was written too much from the writer's point of view. Truth is, tone goes astray not because of interference, but because, simply, most scripts don't work. That doesn't mean it's anyone's fault. Many scripts don't work because... well, because they're scripts. They're not an exact science. Just as most things in life don't work - machines, marriages, friendships, paper planes, everything. It's so easy, with hindsight, to say what went astray, much harder to pinpoint it at the start; otherwise 99 per cent of dramas would be brilliant. In fact, 99 per cent of life would be brilliant! And that's never going to happen. Everyone should have permission to fail and to try again.

If you listen to Bryan Elsley, the co-creator and driving force behind Skins, talking

about the future of drama and the need for a narrative for a young audience, he is absolutely fascinating - and maybe absolutely right. He did the most brilliant interview about this, maybe two or three years ago, I think for the Sunday Times. That interview was so memorable because it frightened me. It said that the people running TV now are of the generation that grew up with it - we know it, we know TV, its forms and potential - but for the generation coming up, those brought up not so much on TV but on video gaming and user content, etc, TV is archaic. Soon, Bryan said, we - meaning me and him, and all of us of a certain age - would be as redundant as the generation before us. It was a real call to arms, to say that new forms of storytelling were on their way. Maybe we won't like it, but that change, that shift, will and must happen. (Will it? Aren't certain rules about drama, about storytelling, as old as the hills? Aren't there some truly fundamental needs that will never change?) Looking back, that was

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CHAPTER SIX

FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

In which JK Rowling is offered a part in Doctor
Who,
Russell begins the search for his successor,
and
Emergency Protocol One is activated

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 JULY 2007 22:49:33 GMT

SAD NEWS...

I just heard that David's mum is very ill. He's left the
set and driven north, heading
home to Scotland. Oh, bless the man. Filming in
ruins, schedule bugged, and no
insurance, because you can't insure against that sort
of thing, but never mind that
- poor David. Poor mum.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 11 JULY 2007 13:34:12 GMT

RE: SAD NEWS...

When you hear the news that David has to dash off,
when Phil or whoever breaks it to
you, and you realise that the making of one of your
scripts is, unavoidably, compromised
- what do you do? Do you shrug and move on? Are
you too busy worrying about
writing to get caught up in such production
problems? Is that Phil's job? Or do you
have a moment, however brief, of sinking your head
into your hands and weeping

uncontrollably?!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 12 JULY 2007 21:35:06 GMT

RE: SAD NEWS...

Still no news on David's mum. We've managed to rearrange stuff so far, to fill in with



non-Doctor material, but tomorrow we run out! The

whole set - Kylie, too - on

@yuliasha

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE			

standby. But imagine David, with his work ethic, knowing that. Poor bastard.

Production crises are a world apart from plain old script worries, probably because a production crisis is shared. There's almost no problem that you can't write your way out of. Location falls through? Lose a cast member? Camera fault? They can all be written around. That training comes from working on the soaps, I think. I was on

Coronation Street when Lynne Perrie (who played Ivy Tilsley) was forever falling sick

or off the wagon, and always at least one actor, in an ageing cast, needed a sudden day off. Soaps are great big ruthless machines that simply can't stop, so you have to find a way to cope. The only Doctor Who example I can think of is The Shakespeare Code, when the Doctor and Lilith were meant to have a sword fight. On the day of filming, the stuntwoman hit the stuntman's eye with her sword -- yikes, his eye! -- and filming had to stop on the spot. But while the ambulance came in, and he was taken away (and it was horrific -- the whole crew was shaken up), Phil phoned me up, explained the situation, and I started typing away with a new version, as transmitted, replacing the sword fight completely; Lilith tries to seduce the Doctor instead. It only took me 20 minutes. A few hours later, we were filming the alternative version. Horrible and awful, but the show must go on.

That can happen, in a small way, all the way through production. Constant rewriting.

Normally, it's because a scene has been dropped at the end of a day; they simply ran out of time. If it can't be rescheduled, I'll type away to adjust yet-to-be-filmed scenes, to remove the original scene from existence. But it's never face-in-hands weeping time.

Even now, I'm half-thinking of a version of 4.1 that would be very Donna-heavy, happened in 4.1, that would help. I have some ideas, like the first two scenes:

in order to give David a fortnight off. He's not asking for that, but I think it's our Sc. 1. Donna leaves her house, locks the door.

responsibility to at least offer it. He has nine months ahead of him of being the leading Sc.2. The Doctor leaves the TARDIS, locks the door.

man, and he won't get a proper break until Christmas now, so we have to consider I know that sounds small, but it took a long time for it to arrive in my head. It sets

practical ways of helping him cope. A Donna-heavy episode would be completely up the crux of the episode: the symmetry of them both on the same mission, neither

wrong for the show, but we could make it work. To hell with

art. knowing that the other is there, and the fact that they're destined to meet. Apart from

Anyway... I go on a month's holiday next Friday, in Italy, which is obviously bugged that, I've a nice image of Donna going to visit someone who's been Botoxed (I still

because I'll still be rewriting James Moran's Pompeii episode. I've said to my boyfriend, like the Alien Botox idea), having stolen something - say, a vial - from Alien Botox

Til have to work a bit on the laptop,' but I haven't admitted that I'll have to work about Inc. Donna talking to this other woman and fiddling with the vial, which activates

12 hours a day, every day, no weekends. That's not going to go down well. Truth be the alien inside the woman! Donna chases the alien into the street, but it's whisked

told, if it's a nightmare, I'll just come home. I've worked on holiday before - Episode away by an Alien Botox van (alerted by Vial Activation), which races along... past the

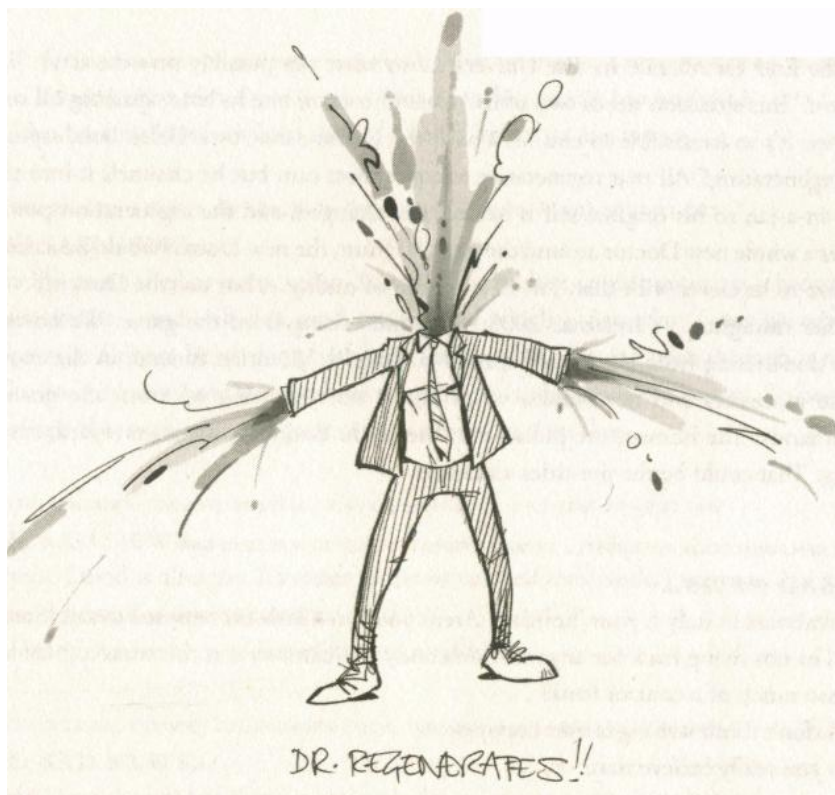
5 of Mine All Mine was written in France -- and it was truly awful. Typing in that heat. Doctor, who's also running to the crime scene! High shot: the Doctor and Donna,

Typing while your mates are frolicking in the pool. That episode of Mine All Mine is standing in parallel streets, literally, both giving up and walking away, not realising that

easily the worst, and that fact is haunting me now. the other is there. That's good. It's still not a story, though.

When I get back, I now have a fortnight to write 4.1. I'm looking at it with terror, I had another idea this morning. You know how, in 4.13, I'm going to regenerate the

especially because it should be a fast, dynamic, funny episode, and this bad mood is Doctor's hand-in-a-jar into a



second Doctor, which can then travel off into the parallel
the worst to be in when writing in that style. I'm not saying you have to be happy
to universe -- in the blue suit! - to live with Rose for ever? This morning, I suddenly
write happy -- I don't think writing is ever happy - but you do need energy.
You need to thought, well, if you've two Doctors in 4.13, why not use them both?
Properly? You've

be galvanised. I feel a long way from that. I feel old, and fat, and slow. If I knew
what fleets of Daleks, and a red Dalek (I fancy a red Dalek - might look good), and Davros,

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

and the End Of All Life In The Universe... so what can possibly save the day?
Two *his main advantage as a writer was that he knew how hard it was supposed to be. That's what IDoctors! 'This situation needs two of us.' One in brown, one in blue, sparring off one mainly think when I read scripts -1 think, you have no idea how hard this is. 'You have no*another. It's so irresistible to end 4.12 with the Doctor, shot by a Dalek bolt, saying, idea how hard this is.' I could have that as a tattoo.'I'm regenerating!' All that regenerative energy shoots out, but he channels it into the

hand-in-a-jar, so his original self is healed, not changed, and the regeneration power
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 15 JULY 2007 23:23:52 GMT

creates a whole new Doctor around the hand. (Hmm, the new Doctor would be naked.
RE: SAD NEWS...I'll have to be clever with that. I'm all in favour of nudity... but not the Doctor!) David's mum died at noon today. So sad. He's back at work tomorrow -- because he

Other thoughts... Christmas 2008: Cybermen rising from the grave. We haven't wants to be - and will stay until the funeral, which is Saturday. I can see what hereally done rising from the grave before. Not fully. A Victorian funeral, in the snow, means, he'd rather be working, although I worry that - having been through it myselfall the mourners and headstones, when hands start reaching up from the graves. - he doesn't know how huge and never-ending it is, the death of a parent. To be goingCyberhands! The humans are pulled into the earth. End on a silent graveyard, snow through that with a bloody great camera shoved in your face...falling. That could be the pre-titles sequence.

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 16 JULY 2007 00:49:27 GMT
FROM:

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 13 JULY 2007 11:58:01 GMT
SAD NEWS...RE: SAD NEWS...
I hope David is all right. It's easier to throw yourself into work, I suppose, but all theWhereabouts in Italy is your 'holiday'? Aren't you just a little bit tempted to say, 'Screw same a brave decision to continue working. She must have been so incredibly proudthis, I'm not flying back for anyone. Somebody else can sort out this mess'...? Or are of him.you too much of a control-freak?

»I don't think writing is ever happy«
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 17 JULY 2007 12:25:49 GMT

Do you really believe that?
RE: SAD NEWS...

David

says the hardest thing is having to learn lines at night. Poor bastard. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:

BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 13 JULY 2007 20:12:54 GMT

I told Julie today that I was cancelling most of my holiday. She just said, 'Well, yes.' RE: **SAD NEWS...**

Hmph. I was expecting some protestations, even if they were faked, but I think, in her The holiday villa is in Sorrento. Frankly, it's palatial. But today I made the terrible head, she's been assuming for ages that the holiday is cancelled. Still, this does mean I'll decide: I booked myself a flight home after just seven days out there. I simply can't be in Cardiff for Russell Tovey's Midshipman Frame scenes. How is a man with stay away. That's not control-freakery; that's genuine panic. The rest of the team is sticky-out ears so completely beautiful? And he's gay -- I can't bear it! Matt Jones said brilliant at sorting out problems, but I'm the only one who can rewrite an entire to me yesterday, 'You're the only exec I've ever met who talks openly about fancying his episode. I need to be here. I can holiday when all this is over. cast.' I said, 'Yes, but I'm the only one who's not actually shagging them.' I'm all talk.

Do I really believe that writing is never happy? (What a day to ask me!) Well, I think I could bring back Midshipman Frame in 4.12/4.13, actually. I have been wondering, that was a grandiose thing for me to say. I must have been in martyr-mode. It can but the cast list is already so huge that Russell would only have time for six lines. Well, be unhappy, certainly. Writing can be a hell of a load of misery. It's such a hard job. we'll see... Writers never talk about how hard it is, out of the fear of being

pretentious. 'Try being Oh, and for the record, I just e-mailed Moffat and finally spoke about the Elephanta nurse or a teacher,' people say. No, sod you - try being a writer! Try sitting with every in the Room. I asked him: is he interested in the job? I'm fascinated to know what his doubt and fear about yourself and everyone, all on your own, with no ending or help reply will be. As is the whole Doctor Who-loving world. or conclusion. I know I'm sort of a happy man and love a laugh, but I think that's

because the job is so hard. At the same time, writing can be the most wonderful job

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 17 JULY 2007 12:51:37 GMT

in the world. When I'm happy with a script, I'm happier than you can ever imagine.

RE: **SAD NEWS...** Delirious! I think what I mean is, writing is never easy. Yes, that's what I meant. Moffat Wow. Okay. Who actually chooses your successor, then? Do you really have a say? sent me a great e-mail about this the other day, in which he wrote:

John Cleese once said (at the time of Fawlty Towers, when he owned comedy) that he thought

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 17 JULY 2007 13:11:02
GMT Text message from: RussellRE: SAD

NEWS...

18-Jul-200717:56It's not like I've got a say; it's just that I'm here, now, in the job, so of course I'm
part Kylie just asked me if I wanted dinner in the hotel tonight. I
turned her down,of it. Silence from the Moff, though. He usually writes back straight away. It's
a because I'm rewriting Agatha bloody Christie. I'm telling
you this just so
youcliffhanger!
make a note of my pain In The Great Correspondence. Oh, my life!

message from: Ben

STEVEN
MOFFAT

18-Jul-2007 20:31

chose Agatha over Kylie? Are you sure you're gay?This is Steven Moffat's reply to Russell's 'Elephant in the Room' e-mail. It
would be a couple of months before either Russell or Steven had a chance

message from: Russellto follow this up...

18-Jul-2007 20:45FROM: STEVEN MOFFAT TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 19 JULY 2007 11:59:42
GMT I think choosing Agatha over Kylie is a whole
new level of gay. Gay Mark II.RE: HELLO

I hope you don't think I'm being weirdly reticent here. I am, of course, thrilled to
my FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2007
22:07:16 GMT

socks. It's not only a dream job; it's my specific dream job since I was about
seven. AGATHA CHRISTIEBut there's so much to process --
kids, Hartwood, Cardiff, other projects, that giddy I'm now
amusing myself by trying to get as many Agatha Christie titles into themountain of Tilings I'm
Never Going To Write And I'm 45 Already, and Sue and
I dialogue as possible.haven't worked together since
Coupling stopped, and we're keen to.1

But I love Doctor Who to tiny bits, I know I'm good at writing it, and I so want it
to FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2007
22:25:56 GMT

continue. And if there were a way to make this work, I know it would be -- to coin
a RE: AGATHA CHRISTIEphrase -- the trip of a lifetime. So,

total turmoil in my head. Probably something you're
20 if you can slip in Ten Little Niggers.not unfamiliar with.

I'll give you

Of course I'm going to talk about it, and hear what the offer is (assuming there
is
22:33:43 GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2007

an offer, which I won't until there is), and add that to the general confusion. If
you
RE: AGATHA CHRISTIE don't mind, I'd need to talk to you
too, so I can hear the Horrid Truth and the Hidden
Actually, I
did try:Wonders. And listen -- don't get reticent on advice. You get stuck right in.

But never mind that for the moment. Russell, seriously, it's a huge honour even to
be
It's like Ten Little -in the frame as the guy who
follows you. Bloody terrifying, but a huge honour. Thing

DOCTOR is, you've really got big shoes. It's not a metaphor -- you've actually got enormous
shoes.
Niggles aside, let's look in the library.They may
haunt my dreams.

Reproduced with kind
permission
But I thought it was too risky, so cut it.1 Hartswood Films is an independent production
company founded by Steven Moffat's mother-in-law Moffat's wife, Sue
Vertue, is a producer and board director at Hsrtswood. Her producing credits include BBC sitcom Coupling, which Moffat
crested and wrote.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 19 JULY 2007 17:24:18 GMT

AGATHA CHRISTIE

Text message from:
Ben

Well,

I've finished 4.7. That was hard. Bloody hard. Gareth's version is much more

Sent: 18-
Jul-2007 16:52

than it would first appear, so I had to be really, really careful, filtering through

I'm on set with Kylie Minogue! In Cardiff's old Coal Exchange building!
Ha
it. I couldn't just blunder in, adding explosions and
monsters. I had to keep the

ha ha! Mind you, on such a sunny day, trust us to be filming
inside.
lightness and the cleverness of Gareth's
original. That's exhausted me. (cont p 166)

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

WILL COHEN TO: RUSSELL Y DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2007
12:06:01 GMT

THE ADIPOSE

EP, 1 - SERIES FOUR This e-mail exchange, on 18 July, between Russell and visual FX producer

I absolutely love this idea. It's fresh, exciting, scary and fun. We want to blow everyone Will Cohen, from The Mill, regards the monsters in 4.1. 'I blabbed to away with the series opener. Heading outside the comfort zone -- exactly where we someone else,' Russell told Benjamin later that day. 'I feel unfaithful. I've

want to be! If we keep the amount of FX shots to a minimum, we may be able to use been having various thoughts and worries about 4.1 for about three days

this crowd software, Massive. We have an exclusive western-hemisphere license for now, and simply haven't had time to write to you about them all. But then

Massive, which uses AI to tell the models what to do, to step over or move around Will came blundering in with a production question, and I sang like a

things in an environment. I'll get to thinking about time, costs, etc, and e-mail you canary...' later.

WILL COHEN TO: RUSSELL Y DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2007
12:29:33 GMT

FROM: WILL COHEN TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 18 JULY
2007 11:47:43 GMT

EP.1 - SERIES FOUR EP, 1 -- SERIES FOUR

I know you're insanely busy, but I'm just wondering, for my own advanced scheduling Sorry to bombard you, Russell, but we're having chats. How about if the fat doesn't purposes, if you think there may be a CGI creature in Ep

1...? take any one shape, but can change to a multitude of forms? When the creatures attack

they can transform into a head, mirror people screaming or laughing, etc? My

about a white blob is how it would look, a few pixels in size, in a daylight street

Check out on YouTube our Tooheys Extra Dry commercial -- I'll send you
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: WILL COHEN, WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2007 11:59:21 GMT

link - where someone's tongue leaves their body while they're sleeping and heads
RE: EP. 1 - SERIES FOUR

to a party. I'm beginning to think there might be. I'd been thinking of a green vegetable/
seaweed

monster, creeping over human skin... but that's been done to death, hasn't it? Am
now I'm quite excited by the idea of a different sort of CGI creature - depending

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: WILL COHEN. WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2007 12:46:15 GMT
on the cost. Have you seen that car advert with those sinister little puppets/
knitted

EP. 1 - SERIES FOUR soft toys chasing after a car? 1 They're only a few inches tall. I think
they're meant

MY GOD, THAT TONGUE! That's brilliant. That's what the Adipose - yes, to be funny, but they
creep me out. I was thinking along similar lines as that, but

called Adipose (I remember from O Level Biology, 'adipose' is a posh word for spongy
creatures - almost cute, rudimentary, blank blobs, maybe eight inches tall,

- will do. They'll separate off from someone when they're sleeping. They distend with stumpy
arms and legs, and a mewling mouth. No lip-sync; they just mewl. They'd

of the stomach, the stomach skin stre-e-e-etching, and then plop!-- divide off into trot along,
seemingly cute, like a kid's soft toy - but deadly! And they'd be white - or

little creatures. I'd like them to be expressive, but I think they might start out as a sort of marbly
white - because they're actually made out of fat. Don't laugh, they

their identity if they morph into any shape. I think the sheer, weird, freaky cuteness is! It's
modern-day Earth, a sinister weight-loss plan. 'Your fat just walks away from

these things is the key. you.' And it does! People take a pill, which turns out to be an egg,
then, while you're

when we very first started, in 2004, I wanted to use the best imagery from sleeping, a little
creature grows out of your fat, comes alive, separates away from you

adverts and pop videos. Like Cassandra, inspired by stick-thin celebrities, etc!and walks off. Yikes. Horrible.

ever since her, I think I've become a bit traditional, and it's time to remember core

Trouble is, for some shots, we'd need hundreds of them. Trotting along the streets.

to remind myself of why I'm doing this, and to push things further than YetMewling. Clambering over people. We've never done that hordes-of-little-creatures

Monster.shtick. I'm quite excited by this idea. I'm worried that we might, in our fourth year, start to repeat ourselves with CGI Big Monsters, whereas little, scuttling, cute-but-horrible white blobs, with stumpy legs and mewling mouths... well, it feels new. But also it feels difficult, problematic, expensive, and a nightmare. I rather like that!

with kind permission

The C.M.O.N.S.. a band of woven hand puppets, featured in adverts for Wie 2007 model Vauxhall Corsa.

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I finished it in 24 hours. Just wait till you reach Chapter 36!

Skeeter-type journalist, leaps onto her back.2 ZAP.'JK's imagination becomes real!

world of Victorian magic replaces the present-day world. The Doctor arrives and

Text message from: Russell

to battle through a world of witches and wizards, with wands and spells and CGI

Sent: 26-Jul-2007 17:37

to reach JK Rowling at the heart of it all...

Dobby just died! I am RIDICULOUSLY sad. It's turning into a bloodbath. But
so

either brilliant or more like a Blue Peter crossover. But worth trying. It's different,
exciting! I'm abandoning Pompeii. Blame JK.

So, Julie is trying to set up a meeting with JK. It's easier getting into Fort Knox

the moment, but that's Julie's skill. (Fort Knox? Is that still true? Or are my allusions

Text message from: Russell

old?) Imagine those opening titles: 'DAVID TENNANT flying at you, then 'JK

Sent: 27-Jul-2007 11:53

She's the only name in the whole wide world who's bigger than Kylie right

I finished it last night. What a book! Mrs Weasley fighting Beilatrix! 'NOT
MY

Imagine the Doctor in a world of magic made real -- that would be glorious. So,

DAUGHTER, YOU BITCH!' Ha ha
ha. there we go. That's under way.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 29 JULY 2007 18:13:16 GMT

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 30 JULY 2007 01:38:37 GMT

HOLIDAY!
HOLIDAY!

Good
holiday?

Rita

A

has

wonders,

That's

certainly.

at

getting

ROWLING!

now.

ha

FROM:

RE:

That

would be - oh God.

Do

you really think she'll consider it? Did you see her on Blue Peter the other week,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 29 JULY 2007 20:21:48 GMT

a

couple of days before Deathly Hallows was released? She was shown a clip from The

RE:

HOLIDAY!

Shakespeare

Code - the bit where the Doctor tells Martha about crying when he read Book

Holiday fine, yes. Gone now. Mind you, I was even recognised in a tiny restaurant on Seven. JK seemed tickled. But can she act?

a godforsaken cliff top on the Amalfi Coast, by a little girl called Molly. One of these days, I'm going tell 'em to sod off, just to see the look on mum and dad's face!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 30 JULY 2007 02:15:24 GMT

No, I won't. But I dream of it.

RE: HOLIDAY!

I was back in this flat for five minutes --five bloody minutes - before Julie was at the That was Julie's first question. After she stopped laughing. I said I'd write around it.

door. Lovely to see her and all that, but c'mon! It's like walking into a blizzard. I've a mountain of work. I have to rewrite the end of 4.7, because David thinks - quite fairly 1 The script had the Doctor driving an open-top tourer into the Vespiform, which falls into a lake, where it drowns.

2

Rita Skeeter is a reporter of dubious repute in the Harry Potter novels.

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SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 3 AUGUST 2007 21:45:41 GMT Besides, did you see JK being interviewed by Jeremy Paxman on Newsnight before the

release of Book Five? She's the only person I've ever seen run rings around him. That self-assured. Anyone who can do that can act. (I just made Emergency Protocol One has been activated! Block Three has been split in two. Colin up that rule, but I'm sticking to it.) Even if it never happens, it's enough to keep me Teague will now direct 4.3 on its own (instead of 4.1 and 4.3 together), and James

will come back to direct 4.1 in a brand new Block Four. In other words, while going through the dark hours. Well, that and Bel Ami porn.

is shooting the Pompeii episode, that's the prep time for James on the Adipose FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 30 JULY 2007 23:51:51 GMT

takes the pressure off scripts, because now 4.1 doesn't have to be ready until the RE: HOLIDAY!

of September. This is a huge relief for me, but also chronic; it means paying I've just been for drinks with Kylie and cast and crew. Everyone's excited about Bernard

Colin and his editor for the work that they'd have done on 4.1, plus finding a new Cribbins' day on set tomorrow. It's a pity, really, that Stan the news vendor is just a

of money to pay James. That's money that won't be seen on screen. Technically, cameo. Kylie had never heard of Bernard, until we told her that he was the voice of the

terrible. In practice, it's the only way that we're going to get on air. Bloody hell. Wombles! I'm tempted to come on set with you all tomorrow, except I'm so short of

time. Not a word of Pompeii rewritten. I haven't even opened the file. But I'm getting

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 4 AUGUST 2007 14:17:53 GMT interested in soothsayers, in a sort of Sisterhood of Karn way, or the Seeker in The Ribos

or that wonderful Fortune Teller in Snakedance. 3 Thank Christ for Doctor

I've started on Pompeii. Five pages in. That's five pages better than this *Who's rich history! There's a wealth of ideas to draw from in a crisis.*

(I woke up in abject terror.) But what do these bloody soothsayers want?

and why and how? I think by breathing in the gases from the hypocaust, people

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. TUESDAY 31 JULY 2007 08:45:45 GMT

Pompeii are turning into stone... because the Stone Aliens (yes, really!) aren't really

RE:

HOLIDAY!

they're dust, and they need to be inhaled to become, gradually, their stone selves.

You really should come on set tonight. You might never again get the chance to see Well, that's my idea for now, but it still doesn't decide what the soothsayers do. I just

Kylie Minogue on the streets of Cardiff. Unless her career takes a real turn for the like soothsayers.

worse.

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 4 AUGUST 2007 15:33:41 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 31 JULY 2007 15:16:25 GMT **RE: POMPEII**

RE:

HOLIDAY!

has the horrible job of telling the writers that you're taking over their scripts?

Oh, all right, I am coming tonight. I couldn't resist. Pompeii can burn.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 4 AUGUST 2007 15:56:23 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 3 AUGUST 2007 12:38:55 GMT **RE: POMPEII**

RE:

HOLIDAY!

always Julie's job. The writers are told in advance that it might happen. It's a

Christ and damn and bollocks. It's August. condition of the contract. They've all got my number and e-mail address, if they want

This is a new low: I'm resorting to going into a Tone Meeting on Monday - it's for to have a pop at me. Once it's done, I do phone them up to explain how and why

Block Three - with a few paltry pages (I hope) of 4.3, and a three-page synopsis of 4.1.4 and wherefore. Keith Temple was absolutely delightful about my rewrites on his Ood

This is bad. It's bordering on an emergency. It feels awful - literally, makes me feel sick. script. Such a nice bloke.

I've just flagged up to Julie that we could abandon Pompeii, and bring in Mark Gatiss'

World War II/Natural History Museum script
instead.

FROM: RUSSELL

T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 7 AUGUST 2007 23:31:10 GMT

POMPEII

Noble arrived today! She was glorious. We had the read-through for 4.2 and 4.7,

3 The Sisterhood of Karn appeared in 1976 Doctor Who serial The Brain of Morbius; the Seeker in 1978's The Ribos Catherine sat right next to David, and she was dazzling. After all that Penny/Donna

Operation; the Fortune Teller in 1983's Snakedance.

4 Each series is split into filming blocks of one, two or three episodes, overseen by the same director. Block One of Series Four

com prised 4.X only (directed by James Strong), Block Two comprised 4.7 and 4.2 (Graeme Harper), and Block Three comprised --at

this stage - 4.3 and 4.1 (Colin Teague),

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

development, I just sat there and thought, this is exactly what I wanted. All that work, all on 4.2.1 had to clear the press release for Friday -- we're releasing a photo of David and that thinking, all those e-mails to you, actually had a result. She's an equal to the Doctor, Catherine on set for 4.7. This involved 20 e-mails. I noticed that the BBC Doctor Whoa friend, a mate, a challenge. It struck me - this is how Barbara Wright would be written, website has a new page of artwork, which we'd promised exclusively to Worldwide for if she were a 2007/8 character.⁵ That feels good. Catherine takes a funny line, makes it books and magazines, so I alerted Julie -- that's a major storm on the way. five times funnier, and aims it like a dart - which makes David raise his game. He throws What else? I decided to swap 4.2 and 4.3 in the transmission order - Pompeii first, then back a javelin! I'm so happy. I realised how scared I'd been all this time, because you never Ood -- so I set that in motion. Since the Ood tale is surprisingly dark, I'd thought that it really know if something is going to work. would undercut people's comedy expectations of Life With Donna, but then, at the

Anyway, this has all interrupted the writing of Pompeii. It's annoying, when writing read-through, I thought that the Ood episode was dark to the point of grim. It's a very

gets interrupted, because you lose the energy, the drive, the flow. It's hard to summon it macho, testosterone-fuelled script, and they're never my favourites, so, yes, it's better as

back. I'll have to smoke-and-coffee myself back into that state tomorrow. I sat here for the third episode. Also today - I watched rushes, Doctor Who and Torchwood, all good,

hours today - all day, really - and managed little more than reducing the length from no notes, and the online edit (the finished picture with FX added) of Sarah Jane 1.3/1.4.1

33 pages to 32, then I wrote one new page, which is all right-ish, and added a joke for worried about the decision to kill Tosh and Owen at the end of this year's Torchwood

Donna about going to the shops in Pompeii ('T K Maximus')... but I promised to (I'm happy to kill the characters, not happy to lose the actors -- but that show needs a

deliver the script tomorrow! Especially with Colin and Phil heading off to Cinecittà shock), so I sent concerned e-mails to Julie.

Also, I'm still debating with Julie whether to

Studios on a recce this week.⁶ (It looks as though filming in Rome really will happen!) leave Mickey Smith in this universe at the end of 4.13, so he can guest in Torchwood and

Not the best time for me to slow down. But I'll have to panic tomorrow. Of course, *Sarah Jane as a sort of roving character - and in Doctor Who, if the next production*

while I pause, the problems and worries are stirring. How come the Stone Aliens' team fancy a link with the past. Yes, I think we're going to do it.

presence in Pompeii is allowing the city's soothsayers to tell the future? In Doctor Who Also, and this is top secret (do not tell anyone), Phil has been offered the job as

terms, there must be a scientific explanation, even if it's not real science. Is Pompeii on producer of Coronation Street I'm so happy for him. He loves Coronation Street. It's

a Time Rift? Don't laugh, it's a quick solution. possibly the only job in the UK that could replace Doctor Who in his heart. He'd be

king of Manchester! And it wouldn't be till the beginning of next year, so he'd only

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 8 AUGUST 2007 00:10:26 GMT miss the filming of the final two episodes of Series Four. But... but... Jane Tranter

RE:

POMPEII

him to stay at the BBC (of course she does - he's brilliant), so she's throwing a

So what does a normal day consist of, to stop you writing? What's a typical day, in your brand new North-West Drama job at him. He'd be based in Manchester, as Head of

role as showrunner? for the entire region. Well, Phil doesn't know what to do. What a dilemma!

was talking him through that. Russell T Counsellor.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 8 AUGUST 2007 00:38:34 GMT And then more work -- I disagreed with Peter McKinstry's design of Ood Sigma's hip

RE:

POMPEII

It's too tricky for a blind and gloved actor. Lovely design, though. I ate a lasagne,

Well, there's no such thing as a typical day. But today? Um... a read-through. Plus, cold, because I didn't have time to heat it up. That's bad, isn't it? I saw a second hip-

talking Catherine and Phil through what will happen in 4.1 so that everyone knows flask design, and approved it. I was asked to sign off on the Series Three DVD boxset

where Donna is coming from. (I enjoyed describing it -- it sounds fun and weird -- but cover, but didn't, because it's terrible. I texted Russell Tovey, just... because. I read and

I'm acutely aware that it has no ending.) I sorted out Sarah Jane Dub dates with Julie. A approved three BBC Novel proposals and one BBC Audiobook proposal. I suggested a

compulsory set visit, if only to see Russell T. Ovey. (He told me that Bob & Rose is one commission for Joe Lidster for a Torchwood radio play. I e-mailed Ben -

of his favourite shows ever, and actually quoted lines from Episode 6. He loves me. It's Oh. That's you.

official.) I had to sort out the end of Doctor Who 4.7, because of David's worry about Bloody hell. And this is a normal day. It's barmy. Mind you, every time I say to

killing the Vespiform. (David T. Ennant: clever, sexy and good on scripts. Why don't myself, 'I can't wait for it all to end,' something grabs me. Julie and I spent the car

I hate him?) I had to come home and do that rewrite, as well as some further rewrites journey to Upper Boat today talking about the New Studio. They're thinking of

it from scratch next to the St David's Hotel. Near my flat! To house Doctor

5 Barbara Wright (played by Jacqueline Hill) was one of the original Doctor Who companions, joining the show at its

inception in 1963 and staying until

1965. 7 In Doctor Who 4.2,

Ood Sigma (played by Paul Kasey) is the personal servant of Klineman Halpen, the manager of Ood

6 Rome's legendary Cinecitta Studios is where HBO/BBC series Rome was filmed, on five acres of outdoor sets comprising Operations.

elaborate reconstructions of Ancient Rome.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

Who, Tonhwood, Sarah Jane, and various other BBC shows. That's vast.

They're even

(RE)WRITING

POMPEII talking about having Universal Tours-style visits! Just as I
contemplate leaving, they go

this extract from James Moran's original script for 4.3, the Doctor andand make the empire bloody
tangible, right on my doorstep. Oh, so tempting, to stay Donna
have just arrived in Pompeii (which they've mistaken for Rome) Inand help set that up. That's thousands
of jobs, literally. It's only a plan at the moment, AD 79, in a bustling
Pompeian marketplace...but a plan that's hastening every day. Ed Thomas is drawing up
designs. It would be

masterpiece. And I'll miss it. Well, I'm going to keep this flat on, so I can press
my This is - this is not today.nose up against the windows and
cry. I really can't keep working at this rate. It'll kill

It has to
stop. Course
it's today. Every day is today, as long as it's today.

time theory, that.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 10 AUGUST 2007 02:14:55
GMT He strides off, exploring. Donna has trouble
speaking.**RE: POMPEII**

on Page 43 of Pompeii. Not enough. Colin and company are in Rome right
now, No, it's not 'today'-today. It's before today. Not
present day.

past. We're in... the past.screaming for pages. Well, tough. It took all day to think of
the water pistol. The

Doctor uses it to face off the alien-possessed High Priestess, the head of the
Sibylline A market trader holds out a gourd to Donna.Sisterhood in
Pompeii. That's where the time goes. Or rather -- I thought of the
water MARKET TRADER 1pistol at about
midday (in the middle of a Sarah Jane Edit), and it took the rest

of Gourd, madam? Very reasonable, the day to convince myself it can work. A lot of doubt. Eventually, I realised it's a great DONNAscene; it's very Doctor to face an alien with a water pistol. His character allows you to

thanks, I... I've already got one. Doctor! get away with murder. Sometimes.

TO;

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 10 AUGUST 2007 22:51:04 GMT

EXT.SIDE STREET OF MARKET

RE: POMPEII

offshoot of the market, filled with interesting fruits and

There are reports on the news that a fire last night destroyed part of the Cinecitta foods. Donna struggles to keep up with the Doctor.

Studios in Rome. Isn't that where Colin and Phil and the team are at the moment, on

[illegible]

Flames leapt 40m (130ft) into the air at one point before the blaze was brought under control The

fire engulfed about 3,000 sq m (32,000sqft), firefighters said. There were no reported deaths or injuries. You don't want to see the boring old present, do you? We want

Firefighters fought the blaze all night and prevented the fire spreading to the densely populated _____ to see what it was really like. In the past. Soak up all that _____

y goodness. Look at it.

urban area around the film studios. The fire began in a store for film sets, destroying sets used in a

television series about ancient Rome, produced by HBO and the BBC. Phil
 didn't nip outside Donna touches a wall, picks up a vase. Tears in her
 eyes.

Who for a smoke, did he, and drop his cigarette? Will Doctor

DOCTOR

(CONT'D)

still be able to film at
Cinecitta? Ah,
good old Rome! The Colosseum! The Pantheon! The Circus

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 11 AUGUST 2007 02:50:16
GMT He looks around at the surrounding area, standing on a
box to get

better view. It's obvious that none of the things he just mentioned

RE:

POMPEII

anywhere in sight. He frowns.

The fire! Yes, bloody hell. The reports from Rome are that there's still enough of
the set

(CONT'D)

left standing for us to film on. Of course, I did ask if they had footage of the
burning, Well, somewhere around here, I'm sure. Might be a tad off
course.

because that could look brilliant for us! Phil harrumphed at me. Well, it's an
idea. How

mad, though. And thank God, otherwise we'd have to go to Malta instead. In
fact,

I've just finished the 4.3 script. I'm knackered. I need
sleep. And it's safe? You've been here
before?

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

THE DOCTOR

Ages ago. And before you ask, that fire had nothing to do with sort of policy. It was never planned that way. Back in 2004, we'd always talked about

me, well, not very much, well, a little bit, well-But I newer my rewriting as a possibility ('polishing' we called it, when we were young and naive,

got the chance to look around properly! The Colosseum! The

Pantheon! The Circus Maximus! Although... you'd expect them to be before we actually had scripts in our hands, and I'd never rewritten anyone before,

looming by now, where is everything? Let's try this way... ever), but Andy Pryor kick-started the whole process when we wanted to offer the part

of

Charles Dickens to Simon Callow. We really needed Simon Callow for that part

--

but Mark's script for The Unquiet Dead wasn't ready.**JAMES MORAN**

that, in some ways, it became a trap. I'd be rewriting an episode and I'd be

thinking,

well, if I didn't get a credit for the last script that I rewrote, why should I? After reading Russell's rewrite of his Pompeii episode, James Moran single out this one? And I have to be fair to the original writers: they work so hard and e-mailed script editor Brian Mtnchin... deserve that credit. It's partly

arrogance as well, because I don't think my rewrites are asFROM: JAMES MORAN TO: BRIAN MINCHIN, MONDAY 13 AUGUST 2007 11:20:15 GMT

good

as my actual scripts. (With the exception of The Impossible Planet! The Satan Pit.

God,

I love that story!) For instance, I think the Pompeii episode works now, thoughRE: 4.3

it's

curious how it's still inherited the linear shape of James's original. I reckon I'd haveHad a quick read, through half-closed fingers - such a strange feeling, I knew it

written
it better had it been mine from the start. Instead of all those months of thinking would be different, because it's always weird being rewritten. But it's bloody brilliant!

and
consideration, rewriting somebody else's script is more like plate-spinning - keeping Once I got used to reading it - by Page 20, I was just enjoying the story. It belts

lots
of things in the air, making them look pretty, hoping that they won't crash. In analogy, it's funny, it's clever, some of my jokes are still there, some are Russell's new

emergency,
I throw lots of things in there - soothsayers, psychic powers, prophecies, ones, and I nearly wet myself at the water pistol gag. I wish I'd thought of that.

funny
squares of marble -- and hope that I can make a story out of them as I go along,

Normally, being rewritten is a horrible experience, but in this case, while it feels

like
an improvisation game. When you've a big, central conceit like a volcano, as long as it's slightly odd (which it always will - it can't be helped), every single change is right,

as
you make sure everything streamlines into that (it's not plate-spinning; it's a maypole right for the story, makes it feel more part of New Who, and is done to make for a

- it's
a multi-metaphor!), then it should hang together. The psychic powers are caused by a better episode, instead of competing for lines. (I had a few bad months on a different

by
the dust, which is the aliens, and the aliens are thwarted by the volcano erupting, etc, project, where it felt like the other guy was changing stuff just to try to stamp

etc,
etc. Ram them all into each other. It's not a maypole; it's a car crash! Fun, though, himself on it, rather than to make it better - and some stuff suffered.) Everything in

RTD's rewrite serves the story and builds on the stuff that I set down, instead of

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 18 AUGUST 2007
00:29:47 GMT
throwing it out. I can see why everything has been done, rather than 'what the hell

RE:
POMPEII are you thinking?! - which has happened to me on other things.

I was
doing further production rewrites on Pompeii today, and thinking about our

I've learned a lot from seeing my version magically transformed into a proper Who

e-
mails earlier in the year, and what I said about characters, that you should keep *TV episode*.
It's really bizarre, and quite fantastic, and I don't know how RTD has

turning
them, keep seeing them in new lights, so they live a bit more. Now, James managed to do a
rewrite where I feel enriched, and educated, and happy. Clearly, he

didn't
have time to get his Pompeii script to that stage of finessing, so he only got the
has evil mind-melding powers.

Reproduced with kind
permission Caecilius family to first base - the father was henpecked, Metella was a nag,
Quintus

was
sullen, Evelina was girlish. 8 Fine, good starting point, and James made them
much
more distinct than a lot of writers would have done. But then the turning must

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 11
AUGUST 2007 03:58:19 GMT

start.
Take Quintus (who only has 25 or so lines, so theoretically a small part, but it's

RE: POMPEII

Why exactly don't you insist on a co-writer's credit for
4.3? true that no parts are small) - a lot of my rewrite consisted
of turning him, like a

barbecue,
making sure that he's cooked all the way through. Metaphor heaven! In my

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 12
AUGUST 2007 18:33:52 GMT

rewrite,
he's sullen and hung over when he first appears, but then he deepens as he

defends
his sister before his parents ('But she's sick!'), then greedy when the Doctor

RE: POMPEII

I know, I know, that credit thing... but it just crept up on us, really, until it became
a offers him money

8
The Roman family in 4.3 consists of a father (Lobus, listed as Caecilius in
the script), mother (Metella) son (Quintus) and daughter
(Evelina).

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
SIX: FIRE AND BRIMSTONE

to take him to where Lucius lives, then as scared as a little kid when they break into January. That's like tomorrow! That could be JK Rowling, or Cybermen in Victorian Lucius' quarters ('Don't tell my dad!'), then brave when he throws the burning torch London. David doesn't like the JK idea, he thinks it sounds like a spoof, so we've got the soldiers to escape Lucius, then magnificent back at the Caecilius' villa when he paused slightly, wondering whether to win him round or just abandon something that kills the Pyrovile with the bucket of water.⁹ And then he's transformed at the end: the he's not going to be happy with. We've got to keep him happy. He keeps us happy. (You sullen youth has become a doctor himself, the image of his hero.¹⁰ That's what I mean should see the rushes of him and Catherine chasing Agatha Christie in vintage cars by turning. No one is fixed. They're all capable of change - not just once in some -- it's a hoot!)

Plus, he might be right. So that idea has parked itself, while Julie tries to plot-reveal, but all the time. They become more distinct by allowing them a fuller life. find ways to approach JK anyway. And I doubt we'd ever get JK -- she doesn't need to do Quintus goes through a lot of stuff, but there's still an essential Quintus-ness to him, it -- so Cybermen in the snow are hauling themselves back into my head. Workhouses, which only gets richer as he turns. Starving children. At Christmas. The Little Match Girl. That's the companion, the

In other news... Peter Capaldi agreed to play Caecilius today. Brilliant casting! And Little Match Girl. Well, maybe a bit older and foxier. The Foxy Match Girl, with the most handsome Quintus you could imagine: a young actor called Francois But we've production problems already: we worked out - no, Julie worked out - that Pandolfo. Julie said, 'Does his skin-tone match the rest of the family?' Me, Phil and we've only really time to shoot two Specials after Christmas 2008. We wanted three: Andy: 'Shut up! Who cares?'

2009, New Year's Day 2010 (instead of Easter 2009, which was the original

and Easter 2010, which then would lead directly into Steven's (or whoever's) FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 21 AUGUST 2007 23:04:21 GMT Brand New Series. Except that doesn't work, does it? The Brand New Series needs RE:

POMPEII

brand new start. Clean sheet. Not following on seven days after us. So what if we let's dawn on me that 4.11 and 4.12/4.13, which once felt nice and distant, are only do Christmas 2009 and New Year's Day 2010? But! We're all geared up for three approaching at the rate of knots. It all has to be done

round and round... with no idea what these storiesbut that's all.

are, by the way. I'd better start thinking!

And Christmas 2008 is steaming up on the horizon! I should be writing that in
Meanwhile, 4.1 is forging its way to the front of my head. But I can't think of an

I can think of a story ending, that's Donna joining up, but I can't think of a9 Lucius Petrus Dextrus is Chief Augur of the City Government. He serves the alien Pyroviles. rock creatures born out of magma.

10 At the end of 4.3, set some time after the eruption of Pompeii, Quintus is training to be a doctor.

straightforward plot ending, the defeat-the-aliens ending. That's normally in place by

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

now. And do I or do I not have Rose appear towards the end of 4.1? Yes, it's irresistible,

but I'm worried that Rose might upstage our This Is Catherine Tate publicity. It'd be

brilliant, just brilliant, to have two edits: one a false scene, where Donna hands over

her car keys to any old woman, and that's the version we issue to the press and show

at the launch, so no one, but no one, knows about the real, second version until it's

actually transmitted! I love that idea.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 21 AUGUST 2007 23:23:17 GMT

RE: POMPEII

A false scene for publicity purposes? Wouldn't The All-New We Never Lie BBC consider that deceitful?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 21 AUGUST 2007 23:48:41 GMT

RE: POMPEII

Well, stories are deceitful. That's my answer. Having two versions of a show is expensive

and ridiculously paperwork-heavy, but I think we can cope. Very tempting.

@yuliasha

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CHAPTER SEVEN

STRUCTURE & COSMETICS

In which Billie Piper's honeymoon causes problems,

Ken Barlow's death is anticipated, and Russell contemplates a Doctor Who movie

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 2007 22:07:19 GMT

TIME-CHECK

I went out for a walk this afternoon. I passed a woman and heard her say to her

husband, 'What time-check is it?' He said, 'Half-past-five.' I thought, time-check?!

That's a word now? Is it hyphenated? Whatever happened to 'What's the time?' But

instantly that rattled off into dialogue, in my head, as I was walking along...

MAN 1

What's the time-check?

MAN 2

Urn... Half past five.

MAN 1

Right. We'd better get going.

Pause.

MAN 2

What did you say, time-check?

MAN 1

Yeah.



@yuliasha

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS

MAN 2

Where's that
from? about music, used to say
that she could sing my scripts. The loon. Some people say it's
a
Welsh thing. I don't know.

MAN

1 I do say the lines out loud, but I don't stop and do
it. I don't finish a scene and give
Why, what's wrong with it?

it a
reading. You'd find me muttering away constantly, sitting here. All night. Always

MAN

2 testing for the rhythm, to make it sound right, to find a
better way of saying it. It's
Everyone else says
'time'. good to read stuff out loud. You
can find all sorts of problems. The tiny details that

MAN

1 make dialogue better. My favourite pet hate
(can you have a favourite?) is the list of

Oh, do they? Well, I apologise. Is there a list of words
I three adjectives: just watch a week's telly and see how often it crops up,
dialogue that

can and can't
use? goes 'I felt hurt, angry,
betrayed'. It's just the writer listing, showing off his so-called

understanding
of motive. It doesn't exist in real life. People don't talk like that. It's muchAnd off they go, straight into an
argument! The term 'time-check' is irrelevant, it's more accurate, more believable, more sayable,
if you make the simplest rephrasing: 'I just a hinge; it's the relationship that matters. It could be a man and
a woman, any felt angry. God, I was so hurt. You betrayed me!' Much better. Instant polish.
Even combination, but they sound like either a couple who have been going out for a
few then, I bet the scene would be more interesting without it. Whatever's going on,
you months, so the initial shine has rubbed off and now they're really getting to know can
pretty much assume those emotions. each other, or a couple who have been together for far too many years
and are now

disintegrating. The former, I think. The latter would be more stark. But I like the fact FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 2007 22:39:45 GMT

that they're heading out somewhere. It's about 6.30pm, 7pm, they're putting on ties, **RE:**
TIME-CHECKlike they're going somewhere posh. Dialogue, mood, location, all there, all vague, but
at Would you agree, though, that every character is always talking about him- or herself?the same
time precise. I might use that exchange in a script one day. I might not. But I Every character has
their own agenda and it's the centre of their world, especially inbet I will. The opening family dialogue in
Mine All Mine ('What colour is linen?') was dialogue with other characters. Is that true?
overheard and stayed in my head for about 15 years before I used it.

Anyway, I thought I'd write and tell you that, because after tens of thousands of **FROM:**
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 2007 23:14:21 GMT

words, trying to tell you what writing is like, it struck me: that's what it's like. All the **RE: TIME-**
CHECK

time, in my head. Writing! **Yes,**
absolutely true. Remember what we were saying about Captain Hardaker in Voyage

of
the Damned, 'full of aches and pains'? Thing is, to think about yourself all the
time

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 2007 22:16:30
GMT isn't necessarily selfish; the self is all we've got. We might touch on other people,
glance

RE: TIME-
CHECK off them, and
sometimes, maybe once in a while, maybe, see deeply into them. But the

Maybe the woman was from up north and you misheard her say, 'What's the
time, other 99 per cent of the time? It's just yourself. There's no other option.

chuck? Ho ho. Interesting that the dialogue in your head changes,
immediately, to Dialogue is just two monologues clashing. That's my Big Theory. It's
true in life,

Man 1 and Man 2, rather than Man and Woman as per the original. You're so
gay. never mind drama! Everyone is always, always thinking about themselves. It's kind of

When you're writing dialogue, do you say the lines out loud to yourself? How
do impossible to do otherwise. I just hate dialogue that goes:

you develop an ear for certain speech rhythms, dialogue patterns and accents? Could

you hear Kylie's Australian twang when you were writing Astrid's
lines? I went to town.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 2007 22:32:11
GMT BEN

Why?

RE: TIME-CHECK

I couldn't hear Kylie's Australian twang, but I could hear Astrid -- young,

innocent,

RUSSELL

inquisitive. If I tried to write Australian, I think we'd end up with cod nonsense.

I Because I n e e d e d to s e e S t a n.

think all my characters speak with the same rhythm, essentially. My rhythm.

Sarah

BEN

Harding, who directed the second half of Queer as Folk and who's very knowledgeable And what did he say?

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS

RUSSELL

He said you knew the truth.

is
talking about himself both physically and -- if you want to get wanky -- morally. But
he's
not saying, 'Actually, I'm going to kill myself.' Revealing and guarding at the same
time
-- don't we always? I don't actually imagine that Hardaker is thinking, aha, I'll talk
Yes, I do.

about
myself metaphorically. It's more of a mood than that.

RUSSELL

Why didn't you tell
me?
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO:
RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 2007 00:04:07 GMT

BEN RE:

TIME-CHECK

Because I was
scared. Dialogue should be
character-driven, but how naturalistic should it be, do you think?

It
depends on the show, I suppose, and Doctor Who's dialogue is often heightened, but it's like
they're both listening to each other. Rubbish! Appalling amounts of TV
dialogue completely naturalistic dialogue would be so clotted with 'urns' and 'ers' and
clichés like that, especially on the soaps, whereas in reality we're all waiting to say the
next and 'at the end of the days' and 'oh my Gods' that it'd be unbearable to read or
listen to that we want to say. Truest phrase ever: 'The opposite of talking isn't
listening. to. Should dialogue in TV drama reflect day-to-day speech? The opposite of
talking is waiting.' Fran Lebowitz said that, and I bloody love it.

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 2007 00:41:51 GMT
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO:
RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 2007 23:25:49 GMT

RE: TIME-CHECK
TIME-CHECK

How you
want your dialogue to sound is entirely personal. That's one of the things we're all talking
about ourselves... and yet our instinct is to guard our inner selves, that defines a
writer. I think the strongest writers in the land write dialogue that sounds sometimes even
from those we love. Wouldn't you have thought those two ideas are like
themselves. Paul Abbott's characters sound like Paul. Kay Mellor's sound like mutually

exclusive?

Kay. Alan

Bennett's sound like him. Within that, they might be writing posh lords

or

checkout girls or mystic swamis or cruel murderers, and each of those characters

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 22 AUGUST 2007 23:47:32

GMT would be distinct, with their own speech patterns, rhythms, habits... and yet there's a

RE:

TIME-

CHECK

fundamental

Abbott/Mellor/Bennett that creeps through.

The opposite of exclusive: they're the same thing, in a way. We think of ourselves, but I'd always aim for naturalism, within reason. I mean, let's not pretend, all the speeches

reveal ourselves through what we say. I think 'reveal' is the crucial word there. We don't in a script are chosen, honed, shaped, edited, so it's always going to be a faux-realism.

actually say what we're thinking, not deliberately, not consciously. We're revealing and (If only your real-life-blather could go through that process. We'd sound wonderful!) It

guarding at the same time. You hear it, every day, in the way people say other people's just depends which faux you fancy and how you use it. It depends on the drama. The

names. If someone fancies someone, but hasn't said so out loud -- and might not even dialogue in The Second Coming was unusually stripped down for me - sparse, blunt,

be hugely conscious of it themselves -- the way that they say that person's name just few jokes - because it was a cold world. Queer as Folk was foul, savage, funny - very

gives it away. More importantly, the number of times they say that person's name, gay! Doctor Who has much more bantering, a witty tone, because that fits the Doctor.

every day. Oh, don't you just love people, for all their transparency and hopelessness? That's how he survives. And so on. But --

That's what dialogue is: it's tapping into those tides and urges, revealing glimpses of I'm not answering this too well, because I don't think about it much. And yet I sit

it, though never revealing any one final truth, because there isn't any one final truth; here all day trying to choose the right words, so I think about it all the time, I suppose.

we're many things, to many people, and a great unknown to ourselves. I love that bit Hmm. I just think that dialogue has to be sayable. It has to sound real, while being

where you say that we guard ourselves 'sometimes even from those we love'. I think it's highly artificial. Blimey! No one said it was easy.

especially from them. All the time. Or maybe I'm a cynic. But I don't think 'love' is the On a practical level... avoid repeating words. That's the simplest advice, and yet it's

cure-all, the great honesty; it's the most complicated area of the lot. Hence, thousands what I must spend 50 per cent of my time doing. Like the word 'just'. I can use that

of years of love stories. It's the centre of fiction, with no sign of exhaustion. word night and day. I just fall into it. 'I just thought I'd pop in and say hello, cos I

It really is crass to use Captain Hardaker as an example, because he's hardly the was just thinking about you, just the other day.' Cut the 'justs'! How many months of

finest fictional creation ever (though I look forward to presenting the annual Hardaker my life have I spent cutting 'justs'?! But word repetition - and those clichés that you

Award), but he is doing what we're talking about. 'It's an old ship, full of aches and pains' mentioned -- can be dangerous. Make sure that every speech doesn't start with 'Well'

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS			

or 'So' or 'Right'. 'Well, I think we should go to town.' 'Well, I don't.' 'Well, you
 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 2007 21:26:22 GMT

would.' Easy trap to fall into. And watch out for the repetition of words across scene
BILLIE divides. It's really easy to end a scene with 'I hope you find him', and then you go and
 Bad news. Billie's agent phoned yesterday. Now, this is a hugely powerful man, but he makes a cuppa, come back and start the next scene with 'I hope you find the room
 called in a genuinely regretful voice. I didn't think he had a genuinely regretful voice. comfortable'. When that runs as one, you go ouch!
 Billie is getting married on New Year's Eve... and wants to go on honeymoon for the

The second thing I do is trim dialogue down into blocks. Discrete sentences. What
 whole of January! That's when we film 4.12/4.13! That's when Freema, and John, and I mean is, when I started writing -- and was a lot more florid -- I would have had the
 Lis Sladen, and Euros Lyn (who's going to direct) have all been booked for. Noooooo!!! Doctor saying, 'I'm gonna go back to the TARDIS, and find the Daleks, and then I'll
 The whole series finale is lying in disarray. Further updates to follow... stop them, and then have a cup of tea.' Nowadays, I'm more likely to write, 'I'm gonna

go back to the TARDIS. Find the Daleks. Stop them. And then, tea.' I spend a lot of
 FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 2007 21:39:45 GMT

time trimming down like that. Although, evidently not as much as I'd like to think.
RE: BILLIE I remember Peter Kay phoning me from the set of Love & Monsters and saying, 'Did
 Oh no! How can you get around that one? Write her out? Change the filming dates? you buy a job lot of commas somewhere? It's all bloody commas! How am I supposed
 What are your initial thoughts? This time, surely, you're sinking your head into yours to learn this? Never seen so many bloody commas in my life!' (Mind you, then I read
 hands and weeping uncontrollably? No? You must be! his autobiography and realised that I could have sold him some. Ha ha.) But even the

commas are a way of breaking down dialogue into blocks. I wouldn't have a character
 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 2007 22:29:31 GMT

saying, 'I'm going to Deck 31 to find whoever's behind all this.' I'd have them say, I'm
RE: BILLIE going to Deck 31, to find whoever's behind all this.' Better or worse? I don't know,
 For about ten seconds, I was just sad. Really sad. Mourning for a lovely story that's but I can't stop myself doing it. Comma mad. But what the commas and full stops are
 gone. It'll never be seen. Not angry, though. That's a waste of time. Leads nowhere. doing is imposing a rhythm, my rhythm, on the words, deciding when they're fast,
 But that deep keening feeling lasts ten seconds, and then I get on with fixing it. when they're slow, when they stop. That's not the quest for

naturalism; that's the quest Immediately. Within about ten minutes last night, I'd thought, right, move the story for the drama, to decide when it's hard, when it's witty, when it's throwaway, when it's where the Doctor's hand-in-a-jar grows another Doctor and he sends it to Rose in the stark, how a scene rises and falls and builds and declines. That's rhythm. parallel world to David's very last episode. Even if it means only seeing Billie on Bad

I do put in 'urns' and 'ers', to an extent. An 'um' or an 'er' indicates that the character Wolf Bay, we can always manage one day's filming with her. It wraps up a whole era

is hesitant, scared, out of their depth, whatever. But do it constantly and it drives nicely. And less people in 4.12/13 will make life easier for me. It's one hell of a cast list.

people nuts. Never make a script annoying to read. I gather 'urns' are unpopular and In a way, it makes Rose being lost for ever even more poignant, because she can't even

frowned on now, particularly in the US. I think it's seen as a bad habit. I've even seen be there for the grand reunion.

it argued that you shouldn't start speeches with filler words like 'Right' or 'Well' or Julie greeted me today with a sad 'How are you?' She thought I'd be glum, but really

'So', that you should let the actors add that sort of thing, to naturalise it themselves. I I'm not. I'm not just putting on a brave face. In fact, my greatest sadness is for Mickey

find that ridiculous. If no one is regulating it, that's just asking for every speech to start Smith/Noel Clarke, because now there's no way to bring him back. That's a shame.

with 'Well'. That's why you can't leave it to the actor. They don't have an overview of But it could all change tomorrow. That's the other thing I've learnt. Like with all that

the whole script and its rhythms. If an actor adds a 'Well' to the last line of a scene, Penny/Donna stuff. Keep on your toes. Julie is on red alert. If anyone can solve this,

they won't necessarily have realised that the first line of the next scene starts with a it's her. I think about the only problem we couldn't cope with is if David disappeared

'Well', particularly if they're not in that scene. Besides, those words are important. In off to Guatemala tomorrow. But then we'd have to close down, so it wouldn't even be

fact, they aren't just filler. 'Right' is decisive. 'Well' is calmer. 'Well!' is flouncy. 'So' is my problem -

deliberate. Every word says a lot. Ahh, bollocks, what am I

saying? I'd even find a way around that.

I am at that stage of my career when the script editor or producer will phone me up
Funny thing is, Julie, Phil and I have all been invited to the wedding. We'd just stand

for approval if an actor wants to swap something as tiny as an 'and' for a 'but'.
This there glowering. Good old Billie, though -- I do love her. She's a phenomenon, and this

means that I'm a despot and will soon
fall. is what dealing with phenomena is like.

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FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 23 AUGUST 2007 22:38:14 GMT
it's in the concept, you can never fix it? Not without a complete rewrite, which has theRE: Doctor
BILLIE
on board for very different reasons? In the end, I think you're left facing the

skipping all the excellent stuff, too. Kylie driving a forklift truck, fighting the come back, but you can't feature Rose, well, why can't you write around that? What's

Lots of good laughs with Morvin and Foon. And loads of sequences, like amaz

the
moment, it's leisurely, so you've time to dwell on the faults. Phil came up with aRE: **BILLIE**

Don't dwell, don't luxuriate, don't show off, don't rely on FX, or Kylie or David. the logic of it. right.

If Mickey came back, it would mean that travel between universes Be blunt, be fast, be ruthless. We had the same problem with Tooth and Claw, it ran at its possible - so where the hell is Rose? Why hasn't she come back for the Doctor? 55 minutes, and we made them cut it down, without losing a single line or scene, to You start to think of dialogue like Mickey saying, 'We invented a universe-hopping 45 minutes, just by taking out every pause, every pan, every relax, until it moved like a machine, and I was the first one to try it, but it turns out it could only work once -- and lightning. And it was magnificent. So we'll get there. Here I am!' Do you see, it's just getting silly? That dialogue is lame. Not one word of

that is interesting or heartfelt. It's bending the rules too far. And that integrity is what makes the story good.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 25 AUGUST 2007 22:49:14 GMT

RE: BILLIE

interviewed Catherine yesterday, on location for the Ood episode, at Twin Peaks

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 24 AUGUST 2007 14:21:39 GMT

(honestly, that's what it's called) at RAF St Athan, in the Vale of Glamorgan.

RE:

BILLIE

There

were soldiers with guns on the gate. We weren't allowed to use our mobile

First viewing of 4.X today. Interesting. Let's shove in the caveats first: it's an early phones inside or we'd be shot at. 'I genuinely couldn't believe they'd asked me,' she viewing, there's much more work to be done, it's running at 78 minutes and really said about being asked to come back as Donna. 'Even now, I just can't believe it.'

should be reduced to 65-ish, and first viewings are often a bit unnerving and off-putting. Apparently, she didn't have to think twice about signing up for Series Four: 'It was a

Every edit after that is dedicated to lifting the programme to what it should be, what it bit of a no-brainer for me, really.' Bless her.

deserves to be, and we always get there. But beyond the cut-this, cut-that, tighten-the-

And then -- blimey -- I spent this morning in a London photo studio with Kylie

whole-thing-up-and-give-me-more-Frame notes, I'm sitting there, as writer, wondering Minogue, posing and pouting with a Dalek (her, not me) for her exclusive DWM cover

what the hell I've done and why I did it. shoot. 'I've had to gracefully accept second billing today,' she said of the Dalek, adding:

A great sense of dismay at watching the disaster movie format fight the Doctor Who 'Well, at least I'm younger!' She was full of praise for you and Julie, too. Apparently,

format. Yes, the very thing that I worried about as I wrote it. Do you remember, at she fell in love with the two of you after that first meeting in London. It must have

the end, I was really proud that I'd combined them? The funny thing is -- and I learn been your Muppet duet, Russell. (She said it was your 'humour, talent and passion for

this lesson every time, yet forget it -- if a fault is fundamental, any problem-solving is the show', but I still reckon it's the duet.) What a couple of days! Oh, and I had my

only papering over the cracks. The cracks always show. Faults persist. They always do. photo taken with Kylie. It was obligatory.

The disaster movie fights the essential nature of the Doctor, because he becomes just How's your day been? Have you started 4.1 yet? I'm surprised at your latest

Any Old Survivor -- a clever one, the leader, yes, but a hapless victim of events. He's assessment of Voyage of the Damned. 'Any problem-solving is only papering over

the

lacking. Now, when the plot turns and he changes ('No more!' he says), then he's in cracks.' Well, isn't that true of the storytelling process full stop? If you're inventing

charge again and good old Doctor Who kicks in; next thing you know, he's outwitting something artificial, something false, and yet you're wanting to convince people that's

Host, battling the Max-Box, saving the ship, and he's the hero. Everything feels right. it's real so that they can suspend their disbelief sufficiently, surely you're 'papering over

But that's a good 50 minutes in. the cracks' from the moment that you start writing?

The Edits next week will go back to papering over the cracks. The fight goes on, long after it's been shot. Maybe none of this will be too evident by the time we're finished.

(It will, though. I'll see it.) But... what do I think now? If a fault is fundamental, if

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 25 AUGUST 2007 23:26:25 GM T

RE: BILLIE

I like your version of papering over the cracks. I'm going to cling to that. Maybe the cracks are more evident with 4.X because it's so clearly a hybrid. You're right, most stories require the writer to wallpaper like crazy, especially those stories that demand so many suspensions of disbelief. Often the wallpapering is sleight of hand -- like in *Tooth and Claw, taking the incredible coincidences of Queen Victoria, the Koh-I-Noor, and*

a werewolf all being in the same place, at the same time, and fighting hard to make that *essential, rather than just an accident. I am a wallpaperer. Yes, that's what I am.*

I'm so glad you interviewed Catherine. That Ood stuff is looking wonderful, isn't it? A quarry in the snow! And I'm loving the thought of Kylie's photo shoot. My God, if that isn't the best-selling DWM ever, I don't know what is... though I'd buy a few copies more if it were Midshipman Frame posing with a Dalek.

I'm making a promise, here and now, to start 4.1 on Monday night. Hold me to it! Mind you, I went and saw The Simpsons Movie this afternoon (not bad, not brilliant), and thank God I dropped that original 4.1 plot, the inverted-bowl-over-the-Estate plot, because that's what happens to Springfield!

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 27 AUGUST 2007 20:31:09 GMT

RE: BILLIE

So. Have you started yet?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 29 AUGUST 2007 23:54:48 GMT

RE: BILLIE

No, I haven't started. Problems with Torchwood have sort of got in the way. The future of the show's looking a bit scary. Chris Chibnall isn't doing a third series - and I don't blame him, he's brilliant, he should fly free! - but I don't know how we'd make it without him. He's just delivered 2.12. Best. Torchwood. Ever. I swear, it's wonderful. And he puts in the hours, which few do. So, Julie has a series with no lead writer. That puts me in a tricky position, because I love Julie, and I did invent the bloody show, so how can I not help? This is really beginning to bug me. I lay in bed last night, thinking, I'll never be rid of this bloody place. What do I do? Oh, there are worse problems to have.

Even while I'm scared and terrified, and berating myself for not having started 4.1, my head is filling up with all sorts of 4.1 scenes. Have I told you the bit where the Doctor admits that he wants a travelling companion, but with no strings, no Martha-fancying stuff, and he sighs, 'I just want a mate'...? And Donna says, horrified, 'You want to mate? He says, 'No, I said a mate! Ha ha. Dialogue like that keeps me going. That won't be said until right at the end, but it's something to look forward to.

@yuliasha

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Top: The Three Who Rule! L-R: Russell T Davies (Head Writer and Executive Producer), Phil Collinson (Producer) and Julie Gardner (Executive Producer).

Right: July 2004, and the first series of the revived *Doctor Who* begins shooting in Vauxhall, London...

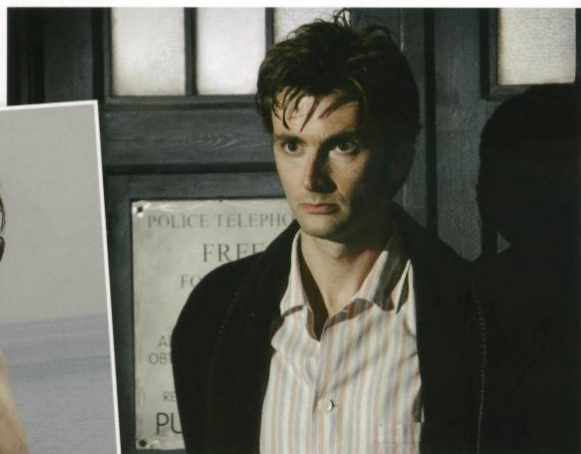
Above: ... with Christopher Eccleston as the Ninth Doctor and Billie Piper as his companion Rose Tyler.



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Above: David Tennant makes his entrance proper as the Tenth Doctor in the 2005 Christmas Special *The Christmas Invasion*.

Left: David in a quarry on Barry Island during the summer shooting of *The Christmas Invasion*.

Below: The first battle between David's Doctor and John Simm's Master took place during the Series Three finale.



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Top: The Doctor first encountered Donna Noble (Catherine Tate) in the 2005 Christmas Special, *The Runaway Bride*.

Above left: Elisabeth Sladen returned as legendary companion Sarah Jane Smith both in *Doctor Who* and in her own spin-off series for CBBC.

Above right: Freema Agyeman, who played Martha Jones in Series Three and Four, with Russell.

Left: David Tennant and Kylie Minogue at the read-through for 2007 Christmas Special *Voyage of the Damned*.

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Top: Kylie explores the TARDIS set.

Above left: A Dalek meets Kylie Minogue – and Benjamin Cook – during a *Doctor Who Magazine* cover shoot.

Above right: Russell T Davies, Debbie Chazen (Foon) and Kylie Minogue during filming of *Voyage of the Damned*.

Left: David Tennant in festive mood!

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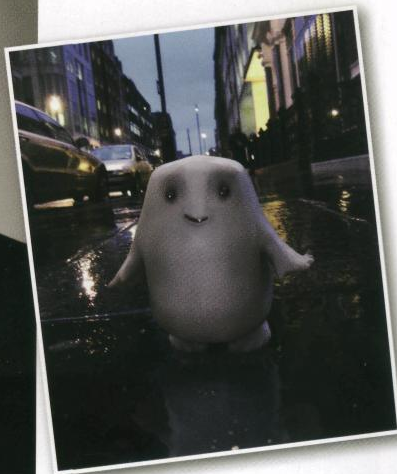
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Above: 2010 showrunner Steven Moffat on set for the 2007 *Children in Need* mini-episode *Time Crash*, along with Fifth Doctor Peter Davison.

Left: Russell Tovey as Alonso Frame.

Below: The Adipose from *Partners in Crime* in all their CGI glory!



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This page: Fun in Rome for the filming of *The Fires of Pompeii*.

Top: The cast and crew enjoy the Italian nightlife. L-R: David Tennant, Colin Teague, Steve Smith, Benjamin Cook, Phil Collinson, Tracie Simpson, an Italian waitress (!), Sarah Davies, Andy Newbery, Ernie Vincze and Catherine Tate.

Above left: Producer Phil Collinson leaps athletically onto a table because of a deadly, slaving Roman rat! Eeeee!

Above right: David Tennant samples the local cuisine.

Right: The night shoot for *The Fires of Pompeii* at Rome's legendary Cinecittà Studios.



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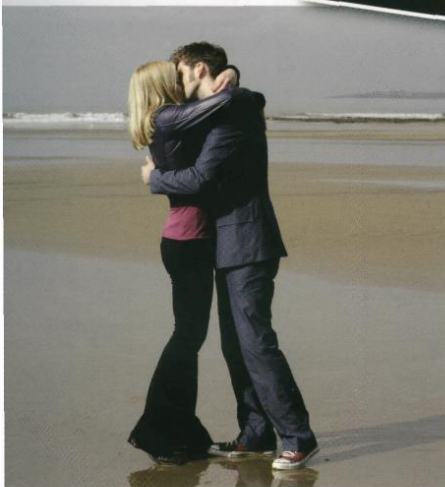
Above: Davros (Julian Bleach) and the Daleks return for the 2008 season finale.

Right: Cast and crew gather on the set of *Journey's End*.

Below left: Together at last – Rose and Doctor #2 at Bad Wolf Bay.

Below right: Scaremongering from the newspapers as David Tennant injures his back.

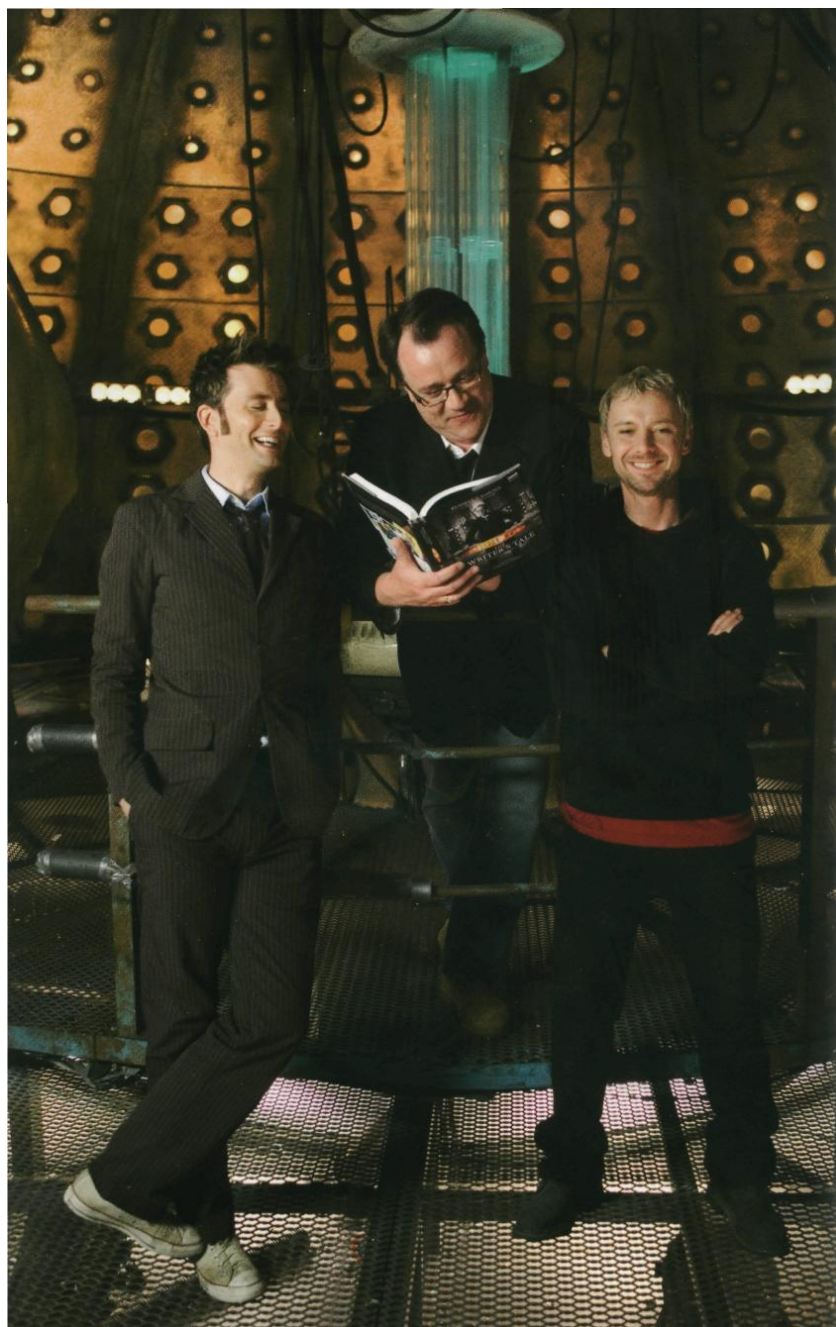
Overleaf: David Tennant, Russell T Davies and John Simm during the cover shoot for *The Writer's Tale: The Final Chapter*.



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FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 31 AUGUST 2007 01:44:09 GMT

4.1

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 31 AUGUST 2007 13:25:58 GMT

RE: 4.1

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 31 AUGUST 2007 21:23:02 GMT

RE: 4.1

1 In 4.1, Penny Carter is the name of a journalist, working as science correspondent for The Observer, who's investigating

Adipose Industries, a London-based company, run by Miss Rattigan (renamed Miss Foster in later drafts), which sells 'miracle'diet pills.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS			

reason that 4.1 can't open with a murder by an Adipose is that I'm not yet convinced and off we go for eight weeks! they do murder. Well, they will do later on, when they're ordered to, but their first It's funny, that list, because it makes you ask - so what is the start? Where does the appearance will be more weird and unnerving than murderous. Instead, the opening of story start? It doesn't have to be the first scene. But should it be? I can imagine a Queer 4.1 is setting out the stall for the whole episode: the Doctor and Donna meeting again. *as Folk that begins with that fourth start, with Stuart strolling past Nathan, stopping,* That's the story. The aliens are just the plot that gets in the way. The cutting between going back. I could make that work, although I'd worry that I wasn't invested in any of the Doctor and Donna is played as a sort of cute conceit, but that's dressing up on the the characters. So, starting where the story starts isn't as obvious as it sounds. A lot of surface; underneath that, it's absolutely fundamental. the story revolves around Stuart and Nathan, but also the story of Queer as Folk is the

In Queer as Folk, the meeting of key characters marks the start of the story, I suppose story of that whole world, so that's what I laid out first. - Stuart and Nathan, with the third part of that eternal threesome, Vince, watching Oh! I was just reading back this e-mail, and I'd completely forgotten that there was them. Of course, if you mean literal start, then that's Vince talking direct to camera. a different start. Long since lost. Queer as Folk Episode 1, Draft One, started with Unusual technique. I was experimenting -- and I never intended that to go past Episode Nathan and Donna (I've used the name Donna before - I didn't even realise that 1. I did that because... well, I was younger, and that's when you try out the tricks. until now) in an ordinary teenage party - drink, snogging, vomit, etc - and Nathan You learn to lose them, I think, as you go on. You'd think that narrative tricks were watching while everyone around him cops off, but he has to stay quiet and closeted. 4 the domain of the experienced scriptwriter, but I tend to find that they're used by the The turning point comes when he sees someone's 12-year-old brother snogging a girl newcomer, thrilled with all these brand new toys, mastering them. As you get older, in the alley outside - like, 12-year-olds are getting some and he isn't! Nathan makes you learn to trust the story a bit more, just tell it. Maybe. But since the drama was his mind up on the spot, goes to the room where everyone has dumped their coats, throwing you head first into The Gay Scene, I wanted those pieces to camera so that ransacks them until he finds 20, and just walks out - abandoning poor Donna - and you'd connect with those boys and get the humour of the piece -- gets the bus to Canal Street. (My favourite bit in that is the stealing the money. There

Ah, but crucially, although the bits to camera came first, they existed for the ending. was always a danger that Nathan would be the sweet, innocent victim of Queer as Folk,

It was impossible to get a proper cliffhanger out of Episode 1's story. Stuart and Vince but actually he was fabulously selfish and ruthless, and the theft set that up, right from

drop Nathan off at school. It's hard to imagine that they'd ever see him again, because the start.) I think, in that version, he'd come out to Donna already, so he got on the bus

he's just a kid. It could have looked like the end of the story, so the pieces to camera saying where he was going in a scene that then must have become, in the transmitted

bookending the episode allowed me to drop in Nathan, at the end, saying (of Stuart), version, Episode 2's 'I'm doing it! I'm really doing it!' scene. That Draft One opening

'Six months later, he was begging me to stay.' And that worked. People were intrigued. was a good start. It was great. But Nicola Shindler said, quite rightly, 'Cut it. Get on

In that instance, the ending of Episode 1 decided the start. with it.' All the scene is doing is saying that Nathan is young, closeted, a virgin. But

In fact, there's a second start to Episode 1: after Vince's piece direct to camera, we cut when you see him sitting on his own, on Canal Street, when he approaches Bernie and

to Stuart, Vince and Phil hitting the streets, copping off, funny dialogue, something I is spotted by Stuart... well, Nathan looks young, closeted, a virgin, so there's no need

very much wanted to show.² All bloody gay dramas have scenes inside clubs -- we had for any establishments. You can't say that dropped opening scene was wrong exactly, but

surprisingly few -- and so I wanted to show something new, that extraordinary street the main imperative was: get on with the story.

life when the clubs shut (in the days when clubs did shut), when the streets would Similarly, The Second Coming had to start before Steve's revelation... though we did

come alive with a whole different sort of gay life. I suppose that's an anthropological always wonder, even sitting in the Edit, whether it would have been better to start with

choice, not a story choice - except the anthropology is laying out the whole style a bedraggled man, a stranger, running over the moors, gasping, panting, collapsing in

and intent of the show, and it's that Walking The Gay Streets that leads Stuart to front of a car and proclaiming that he's the Son of God. That was tempting. I think the

Nathan. Plus, it looks good. Then there's start number three: Nathan on Canal Street, big-screen version would start there, but again, on TV, I wanted a bit of backstory, a

asking Bernie what's the best place to go, and Bernie's foulmouthed reaction.³ That was bit of real life, and the kiss from Judith, which is really when Steve's life changes. Then

absolutely laying out my other agenda: in contrast to Vince's funny piece to camera, you again, when The Second Coming was adapted for HBO (they commissioned a trial

get a virtuoso destruction of the entire gay scene from a bitter old man. Not like me at script for a potential series, never made), they had a good 30 minutes of backstory at

all, ha ha! Finally, start number four (four!): Stuart spotting Nathan, Vince seeing this... the top, the revelation came right towards the end of the first episode, and it worked.

² Phil Delaney (played by Jason Merrells). friend of Stuart and Vince.

³ Bernard Thomas (played by Andy Devine). a cynical veteran of the gay scene, in Queer as Folk and Queer as Folk

2. ⁴ Donna Clarke (played by Carla Henry), Nathan's best friend.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS

In fact, I did wonder if it was better. It was a very good adaptation.
 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2007 16:06:48 GMT

And new Doctor Who... well, it had to start with Rose Tyler. Except it didn't, actually. RE: 4.1 It started in outer space, zooming in on her flat. We needed that. It gave her whole Here's this afternoon's work. This is revolting! The Adipose are disgusting. For the firstworld an outer-space context, with the promise of weird things to come. I drilled into time ever on this show, I'm typing something wondering what Editorial Policy will the production team that the whole montage of Rose's life had to last only two minutes make of it. In fact, I went back through it and took out most of Stacy's pain.5 Originally, (we failed with the two minutes, I think, but we came close) before things turned I had her writhing and suffering and stuff, and it was too horrible to watch. sinister, with shop window dummies coming to life in the basement. That's when the Now I must go and address the gays at Cardiff Mardi Gras. I'll come back and

continue

tonight. world of Doctor Who arrived. That was the real start.

In the end, I think what I'm saying is, start with the story and its context. Its

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2007 16:32:07 GMT

surrounding world. But that's just me. Maybe I worry about context too much.

RE:

4.1

In other news... we spent all day hammering 4.X into place. I like it much more now. We took out all the flab and the pauses, so it's ten minutes shorter now -- 71 Browsing the BBC Writersroom website the other day, I found some guidelines -- on minutes -- and much better. Also, right now, David and Julie are being police-escorted Situation Comedy, but I wonder whether the same rules apply to Drama -- that state:

down the motorway to get to the Blackpool Illuminations! David is switching on the *It is useful to think of organising a story in three acts. The first act [...] sets up the*

lights. The traffic was so bad that they've got outriders clearing the way. I wish I could *major story of the episode, and introduces the major sub-plot. The final act [...]*

have been there. Meanwhile, I texted Russell Tovey, to tell him how good 4.X was,

and *resolves both main plot and sub-plot. The middle act [...] develops the narrative but*

he replied: 'I'm in Ibiza with my boyfriend.' I'm in Cardiff. Life is a bitch. *around halfway through the script, pushes things off into an unexpected direction.*

Do
you agree? Is there a formula for determining what happens when? Do all self-

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2007 02:39:37 GMT
contained stories follow a three-act structure? I'm trying to think of exceptions, but

it's
difficult, because three-act structure is, in effect, Beginning, Middle and End. All

RE: 4.1

stories
have that, don't they? (But not necessarily in that order?) I ask because the end

That's enough work for tonight. I'm too tired. The monster is about to appear, and

of
Scene 43 in your latest instalment... well, that's the end of Act One, isn't it? It's an
then the action starts, but that needs a lot of energy to write. Monster on Page 13!

advert
break, if the BBC were a commercial station. I'm not saying that you thought,

That's late. Bollocks. I'll try to trim it down. There's a lot of adult chat so far, which

right,
this is the end of Act One. But perhaps an experienced scriptwriter organises his
doesn't feel very Doctor Who-ey at all. It's more like a detective yarn. Still, that's the

story
in such a way without even thinking?

story. Follow the story. But I'm worried that it's a bit dull for kids. Mind you, the
monster is revolting, so that'll make up for it.

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2007 22:41:28 GMT

I needed a gizmo inside every customer's house, to activate the Adipose. I couldn't

RE:
4.1

think what it could be. That's why I stopped last night, because I was stuck. I spent all

That's
funny, I just opened the script again for the first time in hours, and that bit you
day trying to invent something. Sitting in the 4.X Edit, just thinking, what activates

mention

-- the Doctor and Donna in the street, alone -- is on Page 20, exactly a third
the Adipose? What gizmo? Originally, I'd thought of mobile phone signals - something
of
the way through a 60-page-ish script! It is the end of Act One! I hadn't realised. Oh,
about banning digital signals from Adipose HQ, because they needed one, clear signal
that's
weird. I wonder if I like knowing that.
to activate all the Adipose at once. But that's rubbish, isn't it? Like other digital signals
The
language of scripts has now become so formalised, it's losing its mystique
would interfere! Like a big, modern building with computers and sales floors would be
(and
that's good - there shouldn't be mystique), but along with that comes all the
digital-free! But I had no better idea. I delayed writing tonight until 10pm - still no
deconstructi
and then the textbooks, the experts, the catchphrases. I've never read
idea, but I sat down to write anyway. The moment I started writing, I just thought, oh,
it's a free gift! It's a pendant. You always get free gifts with these mail-order things.

5

Investigating Adipose Industries, Donna visits one of their customers, Stacy, at home. However, Donna activates an
Right, to bed! I must write loads tomorrow, but it's Cardiff Mardi Gras.
I'm Adipose pendant, inadvertently, causing Stacy's body to divide into several Adipose creatures, kilting
her outright. The
Adipose
escape.
the patron, so I've got to go. Charlotte Church is the other patron, but she's
too 6 The Doctor and Donna are, separately, pursuing the escaped Adipose - but lose them. The final image
of Scene 43 is a
high
shot, from above the houses, of Donna standing in the middle of Stacy's street, and parallel to her, in the next street
along,
the Doctor standing in the middle of the road, each unaware of the other being there. Then Donna walks off one way,
pregnant.
the
Doctor the other, into the night...

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SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

any of those how-to-write books. They scare me. I was once bought a copy of Robert McKee's *Story*. Is he scared? Does his wife really love him? Can he really kill her? They talk about McKee's stuff. I opened it at a stray paragraph, flinched at what I read, and closed it. I've got the shape, not the essence, obscuring valid discussion of the actual story -- and I've never opened it again. But not because I disagreed with it. Rather, the paragraph that I read is far more important. In fairness, as I've said from the start, it's hard to talk about *read* was so accurate that it sort of shocked me. I thought, I don't want to know! I'd rather read actual writing - the ideas, the scariness, the exhilaration - so I shouldn't be surprised to think about that stuff myself than be taught it. I don't want some tutor's voice intruding on if the formal language is a substitute, but I really do start to react violently when they think to my head when I'm trying to write. I've enough voices already, thank you. And here the substitute begins to take control...I am, talking about how to write. So sue me. It's easy to mock something that a lot of writers find useful, but those BBC guidelines

This script language wasn't really around when I was starting out, certainly not in the sense that you quoted say 'halfway through the script, [the narrative] pushes things off into

TV, so I'm not versed in it. It's not how I think about scripts. I don't think, Act One, that it's an unexpected direction.' Really? Must it? Things like that start to become rules, not

Act Two, Act Three. It's just not wired into my head. (But I'm 44. If I were 18, maybe I'd be rattling off suggestions. But Goldilocks and the Three Bears doesn't do that. (And I'm not using a

I'd be rattling off Third-Act-B-Plot-Denouement theories like a good 'un.) I do think that Goldilocks is a fairytale lightly; that's a classic story that will outlast us all.) The bit where

about shape and rhythm, though, and the direction and velocity of a script - and, the three bears eat the bears' food and tries out their beds and goes to sleep (the 'middle act') doesn't

crucially, I do think of Beginning, Middle and End. As you said, that's the same thing that surprises us; it's clearly setting us up for a 'final act' in which the three bears return

as Act One, Act Two, Act Three, but in a different language. Every story ever told has a home. And we bloody love it, because we just know what's going to happen. Equally,

has a Beginning, a Middle and an End. It's fundamental. But this is where I'm wary of saying that you can't spin off in an unexpected direction a few minutes into the

of a formula, because I don't think of the Beginning, then the Middle, then the

End. 'first act'? That's what great, modern films do, like the Charlie Kaufman stuff, like

They're all connected, they're all the same thing, each dictates what the other is. It's *Being John Malkovich or Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind. (I'm sure someone could*

back to that big soup of Maybe in my head. Soup is shapeless. draw up a list showing how those stories do, in fact, conform to absolute rules, but to

Julie and I argue about this. When she reads 4.1, she'll say what you said: the Doctor hell with 'em. I'm not listening.) If you're a writer, don't fret away the hours worrying

and Donna in the street, walking off into the night, in opposite directions, that's about this structure stuff. All the joy and fear and fun and despair is in the writing,

the end of Act One. And I suppose you're both right. There's a clear break, we shift not in the flowchart.

location, we shift mood. But /never think of it like that. I just know that the story has P.S. Cardiff Mardi Gras was barmy. I ended up on stage with Lisa from Big Brother

to pause there. It has to earth itself and get a bit more real and heartfelt. That's when *4 and Faye from Steps.7 Oh, and a Dalek. Then I got mobbed outside the park. One*

Donna will go and visit her dad on the hillside (we're inviting back Howard Attfield, person, then five, then ten, then 20, and they were all drunk, and I was getting pushed

who played Geoff Noble in The Runaway Bride -- along with Jacqueline King, who onto the road and grabbed by short drunk Welsh men. Ever so slightly scary. Imagine

played Donna's mum, Sylvia), where he sits with his telescope. After that, Donna goes being David Tennant!

back to Adipose Industries. Whatever her dad says on that hillside has consequences, pushes Donna onwards. Every scene should advance the story, even if the advance is FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2007 23:21:51 GMT

tiny. (People often mistake this for 'every scene should change the story', so you get RE: 4.1

labyrinthine scripts full of plot twists and sudden shocks and reveals, which is the path You met Lisa from Big Brother4?! OH! MY! GOD! So jealous!

to nonsense.) The scene must change Donna's mind -- so she goes to work, meets the End irony.

Doctor, and then it's a hell-for-leather race to the finishing line. But I don't sit with A question: how do you think the structure of a story written for TV differs from diagrams or cards or a sheet of A4, working that out. I just feel it. Maybe it's inbuilt. that of, say, a movie? The shape must vary depending on the length of the story being

Maybe I'm more disciplined than I realise. Maybe that's why I run away from a single told, even within TV formats? Is it a 25-minutes-a-day serial drama, a 13-week run

Robert McKee paragraph, because I like the arrogance of imagining that I've worked of 45-minute episodes, a 60-minute Christmas special, or two 90-minute episodes

it all out for myself... when, in fact, it's commonplace. shown over a bank holiday weekend, probably starring Robson Green as an ordinary

I worry a lot about that formal structure language, because it's the one thing that the man with a mildly interesting job, who's pushed to the limit when his child, wife or inexperienced cling to. A learnt language. Like a set of crutches. Meetings throughout girlfriend is murdered, kidnapped or involved in a car crash? But does the the industry now consist of script editors and producers sitting there saying, 'Where's narrative

the Second-Act Reversal?' Idiots. Really, they should be saying, 'Who is this man? Why

7

Lisa Jeynes was a contestant in the fourth series of Channel Four game show Big Brother, Faye Tozer is a former member

Pop

group Steps (1997-2001).

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS			

structure of television drama, regardless of length, stand distinct from other storytelling. End. Every story does, just in the telling of it. mediums? If you're watching a movie, the chances are that you're sat in a cinema or The worst thing that happens these days is that channels and commissioners think you've purchased a DVD or... well, you're less likely to walk out or turn off. This must that a shape is flexible. They take a two-hour drama and split it into two one-hours. make a difference.

a profoundly different shape. It happened with Casanova. That was written as

Also, what is it that attracts you, Russell, to telling stories on television as opposed two 90-minute episodes for ITV, but when it shifted to the BBC, who don't really to writing a novel or film script or radio play? have 90-minute slots, it became three 60-minute episodes. I rewrote it to a certain

but there wasn't time to rewrite from scratch, so the 90-minute shape remained FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2007 03:52:10 GMT

-- and the finished drama staggered a bit as a result. (It's still two 90-minute

on the DVD, for boring overseas-licensing reasons, which almost restores it.) RE: 4.1

often, shows are written, or at least conceived in detail, or even completely shot, Films are a whole different world. I'm often asked to write films, and it scares me

then a new duration or slot is imposed -- and it really can ruin something. That a lot, because it's a whole new regime. That's why I will write one eventually; scary

has been through a writer's head, he's forged his way through his own personal and new is good. I was thinking today about a Doctor Who movie, should it ever

Middle and End, and then the whole thing is fractured and pasted back happen, because suddenly it occurred to me that something that we take for granted

Terrible. about the Doctor becomes a huge selling point in a movie: the fact that he doesn't use weapons. That's just a given on TV (well, bar the odd moment where he has to »what is it that attracts you, Russell, to telling stories on television as opposed to blow everyone up!), but in the cinema, a cinema full of action heroes with Uzis and writing a novel or film script or radio play? »blades and bullwhips, the Doctor becomes a truly extraordinary figure. You'd

actually I watch TV. I love TV. If there's a big movie on TV tonight, I'm still much more likely to centre piece that, rather than assume it. There's something of some sort of Film Theory to be hopping my way between The X Factor, Casualty and Smallville. TV is my first work in there; that movies have more focus, less sprawl, more of a centre; a simple choice. Always. Therefore, I think TV. When I think of More Gay Men, I don't think a characteristic can become a movie's entire purpose. of a one-off story; I think of a six-part TV series, immediately. That's instinctive. I like

This whole formality about structure in storytelling has really evolved from the looking at new televisual shapes, too. I'd love to write a drama in 52 episodes. Once a movie, and sometimes, I suspect, it just doesn't fit television. Television can ramble, week, half an hour, on BBC Three or Four, just the simple story of a man and his life, and pause, and deviate, and accelerate. It really is a different art form. With the soap so you can see how character and story develop over a whole year. That idea sprang out of opera, we've a brand new form, which is still evolving. We've had 47 years of Ken of the conversations we're having here. (No, you can't have ten per cent!) I'd call it 365. Barlow's life. 8 Forty-seven years! Like it or not, no fictional character has ever existed in Or maybe Happy Birthday, if you started and ended on the man's birthday. I like that, such everyday detail. Not ever. Brand new form of fiction! And utterly shapeless -- a because I think a lot of telly still apes film, and not enough says, look, here's a sprawling, couple of dozen different production teams, with different agendas, over all those years, constant, available-to-all art form that doesn't often take advantage of its uniqueness. A with no overall plan - and yet time is going to impose on Ken Barlow a Beginning, a story can last a year. Literally. I find that exhilarating - and knacker, because I'd have a Middle and an End, as we move from his youth, through his adult life, to his death to write them all, God help me. Imagine having to write a half-hour script every week! one day. Fascinating, isn't it? Structure imposes itself, just through the passage of time. I'm interested in what would happen to me. There has never been a fictional form like the soap opera before. It's hugely underrated Anyway, here's a bit more of 4.1. Nice last scene. Sentimental. But it's meant to and unconsidered. It's funny, you defining that street scene as the 'end of Act One', because then I

As for whether structure differs depending on the length of the story - well, again, thought of the next scene as the 'start of Act Two' -- and wrote it accordingly! This e-

every script is different, and every show is different. That's another reason for my mail correspondence is having a direct effect on the actual script. Is that weird? I think

distrust of blanket rules. Look at the rambling shape of The Royle Family or Early

Doors
Gallifrey will be allowed to blame

it s good. And now it means that posters on Outpost

- *idiosyncratic, shambling, eccentric and genius. I think standard sitcom rules would you for the downfall of western civilisation, too!*

decree that those shows shouldn't exist. At the opposite end of the scale, there's Steven

INT. NOBLES' HOUSE - NIGHT

Moffat's Coupling, which is plotted as tight as a drum, with the precision of a Swiss

watch. All different. Again, though, they all have some sort of Beginning, Middle and DONNA comes in, still shaken. A pause. She gathers herself,

then...

8 Ken Barlow (played by William Roache) is the only surviving character from the first episode of Coronation Street in 1960.

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SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

too expensive, the
amateur astronomer. All nice and quiet; she
Real life slams back in! Mum, SYLVIA, in the kitchen - loves her dad.

SYLVIA

GEOFF

And what time's this? Aye aye. Here
comes trouble.

DONNA

DONNA

How old am I?! Permission to
board ship, sir.

SYLVIA

GEOFF

Not old enough to use a phone! Was she nagging
you?

CUT TO:

DONNA

45. INT. TARDIS - NIGHT Big time.
Brought you a thermos. And a Mars Bar.

Seen anything?

THE DOCTOR hurries in, goes to the console, fast, starts
pressing buttons, preparing a scan. Then, carefully, he
gets GEOFF

out, dangling on its chain... I've got Venus, with
an apparent magnitude of minus 3.5.

At least, that's what it
says in my book. Come and see.

The GOLD ADIPOSE CAPSULE. There you
go...

CUT TO:

She puts her eye to the
telescope. (FX?) Her POV

46. INT. NOBLES' HOUSE - NIGHT through
TELESCOPE. Venus just a dot.

SLOW TRACK IN ON DONNA, just sitting there, as SYLVIA

busies

GEOFF (CONT'D)

herself all around her, passing to and fro.

the solar system named after a woman.

The only planet in

SYLVIA

DONNA

...I thought you were only moving back for a couple of

Good for her.

weeks, but look at you! You're never gonna find a flat

while you're on the dole! I mean, it's not the 1980s, no telescope, looks up into the night sky.

Donna leaves the

one's unemployed these days. Except you! How long did

that job with Health and Safety last, you

two days? Then

DONNA (CONT'D)

walk out! 'I have other plans.' Well, I've not seen 'em! could go out there.

Imagine if you

And it's no good sitting there dreaming, no one's gonna

come along with a magic wand and all

make your life

GEOFF

better -

late for me, I suppose. But a

We will. One day. Bit

there's gonna be people like you

hundred years' time,

DONNA

amongst the stars.

and me, striding out

Where's Dad?

DONNA

SYLVIA

seen a little blue box?

Don't suppose you've

Where d'you think he is? Up the hill! Where he always

GEOFF

something?

CUT TO: Is that slang for

grass, next to him.

And she sits on the

47. EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

DONNA

DONNA trudging up a lonely hillside.

ever see a little blue box, flying

You shout for me, Dad. Oh, you just

FX: beyond her, the lights of London, glittering.

But she's not here for the view. There's her dad, GEOFF,
sitting on a little camping chair, with a telescope - nothing

No, I mean it... If you

up there in the sky...

shout.

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SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

GEOFF

And I mean for real, he exists, I've met him.

(smiles,

kind)

And I just

let him fly away. But I ' m gonna meet him again,

I don't understand half the things you say, these days. Dad. One day. If I have to

wait a hundred years. I'll find

.

DONNA

TO:

Nor me.

INT. TARDIS - NIGHT

Pause.

on THE DOCTOR with glasses & attachments like in 3.12,

GEOFF

the opened CAPSULE, tiny wires trailing out.

Fair dos. You've had a funny old time of it, lately.

DOCTOR

Seems to be a bio-digital relay specifically

DONNA

You can talk.

up, looks round, aware that he's talking to himself.

GEOFF

SHOT POSSIBLE of the Tardis. The ancient, slow creak of

Oh, I'm on the mend. But you had poor old Lance, bless

vast, empty space.

him.' That mad old Christmas.

Doctor alone.

DONNA

S'not the half of it. You wouldn't believe the things It is an absolute nightmare explaining what Donna has been up to since The Runaway

I've

seen.

What did she tell everyone happened to Lance? I have a version worked out

was attacked by the Empress' Webstar, so Donna would have said that he

GEOFF

Then

me.

because of that), but it's a five-page speech -- no, worse, it's a fake speech, because

would have had that out with her parents long ago -- and I just don't want to

DONNA

for that amount of exposition. No wonder the Doctor never went in for that

Just tonight, I was...

(pause)

dinner with her folks!

Doesn't matter. Sometimes I think I'm going mad.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2007 15:48:45 GMT

GEOFF

Well, you're not yourself, I'll give you that. I dunno.

RE: 4.1

You just seem to be drifting, sweetheart. I've been sitting here for two hours, fiddling over rewrites to Donna and Geoff's chat

Scene 47. I'm sending you the new version. I thought you might like to see what

DONNA

I'm

not

drifting.

I'm

waiting.
to...

I'm up

GEOFF

What for?

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2007 16:00:03 GMT

DONNA

4.1

The right man.

for that, Russell. If you've time to answer this, I'm interested in why you've

GEOFF

those changes to Scene 47. Despite all the thought processes that I keep asking

Oh, it's always a man. HIGH SHOT, slowly pulling
out. you about, we haven't answered
exactly what it is that you do, 'tweaking' and 'fine-

when sat in front of your computer, with last night's script on the screen...

Donna 5, Dad looking up.

DONNA

No, I

don't

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:

BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2007 17:17:12 GMT

mean like that. But he's out
there **RE: 4.1**

the opening to Scene 47 remains unchanged, as things stand, right up to Geoff

9 Donna's fiancé Lance Bennett(played by Don Gilet), turned out to be working for the Empress of the Racnoss. who
later

murdered him.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS			

telling Donna that Venus is the only planet in our solar system named after a woman. I took out a line of Geoff's - 'Then tell me' - interrupting Donna's speech. It was just 'Good for her,' says Donna, and then she adds: 'Imagine if you could go out there.' fluff. No, it wasn't fluff, it was meant to be a little bit insistent, to suggest that there. When I went back to that today, I realised that last line of Donna's was way too on- has been a lot that Donna hasn't been telling her dad since Christmas, but only a CSI

forensic-style examination would get that amount of meaning from a simple line, so the nose. This is the new, subtler version:

gone. And it saves space. it's

DONNA

Good for her.

you're not yourself, I'll give you that. I dunno.

Donna leaves the telescope, looks up into the night sky. You just seem to be drifting, sweetheart.

DONNA

(CONT'D)

DONNA

not drifting. I'm waiting. I'm

How far away is that...?

And then I spent about half an hour on the internet, trying to find the distance from I keep worrying about that line. Is it too poetic? It's staying for now, but it's on a

Earth to Venus - in miles, because Geoff wouldn't use kilometres! I discovered that on caution.

the transmission date of this episode -- say, roughly, early April 2008 -- Venus is too far GEOFF

away, behind the Sun, so Geoff wouldn't be able to see it. Damn. So I changed Venus What for?

to Mars -- and changed Donna's line about a Mars Bar to a Twix, or there's too much

Martian talk, but I really hated cutting the 'only planet named after a woman' line. But The right man.

then I realised that this is actually 2009, in story terms, since The Runaway Bride was

set at Christmas 2007, and this episode takes place a little over a year later. I entered it's always a man.

Oh,

that April 2009 date - and Venus is close! Hoorah! The 'only planet named after a

woman line went back in. If I've got the calculations right... DONNA

No,

I don't mean like that. But he's out there

somewh

And I mean for real, he exists, I've met him.

GEOFF

And

then... I just let him fly away.

About 26 million miles. But we'll get there! One day.

Hundred years' time, we'll be striding out amongst the

stars. Just you wait.

Well

then. Go and find him.

You'll have noticed that I took out Geoff's 'Bit late for me, I suppose' line. That lovely

actor, Howard Attfield, has been ill and had chemotherapy. That's why there's that that line of Geoff's is the biggest change. I made a mistake, because Donna

Now,

reference later on in the scene to him having been ill ('Oh, I'm on the mend'), though this scene with a very fixed state of mind. She could have delivered her big

came to

even that makes me shiver, so I might take it out. But 'Bit late for me, I suppose' is speech from the moment that she arrived. I'd forgotten the point of

Til find him'

equally grim, isn't it? Also, I had Geoff saying 'there's gonna be people like you and me, which is that contact with her dad changes Donna. She's lost, upset over

the scene,

striding out amongst the stars', but I thought that was, again, a bit unsubtle, since we now, I hope, there's a slight sense that she's sort of given up, and then a

Stacy... so

all know that Donna will be flying off into space by the end of this episode. The word from her dad puts her back on track. Funny thing is, I was rereading our e-

quiet

scene continues unchanged until:

mails

and I saw that yesterday I said to you, 'Whatever her dad says on that hillside

has

consequences, pushes Donna onwards.' Clear as day. But when I came to write

DONNA

that

scene... I forgot! Sometimes, I can get too close to a script and lose sight of why

That's not the half of it. Things I've seen. Even
wander away from my original intention. Or maybe I've lived with that
tonight,
was...
take it for granted and forget to actually say it. That one, I
(pause)

I'm there. I

I

intention for so long that I

forgot

overnight! Thank God for these e-mails. That's what rewriting is: discovering

Doesn't matter. Sometimes I think I'm going mad.

the

point of a scene. If it has no point, cut it.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SEVEN: STRUCTURE & COSMETICS			

wish you'd tell us what really happened. Unless it's got a great gag. Or a naked man. And you'll see that Donna's 'He's out there

somewhere' line has been shifted from her earlier speech, because it sounds better here.

And Donna's speech here needs to be longer, for the camera move and for the mood.

Finally! That's the missing line. After all that wondering what Donna did or didn't. The scene

continues: tell her parents

after The Runaway Bride, I realised this morning, walking to Tesco,

that

a lot of Donna's unhappiness comes from not being able to tell anyone about the

Donna lies back. HIGH SHOT, pulling out on the two of them,

both Donna and Dad looking up at the night sky. Doctor. Geoff's line -- 'I wish you'd tell us what really happened' -- encompasses all

that,

and Donna's next speech flows a little better as a result:

DONNA

Yeah. That's what I'm gonna do. If I have to wait a

DONNA

hundred years. I'll find

him. I know. It's just... The things

I've seen. Sometimes I

think

I'm going mad. Even tonight, I was...

GEOFF

(laughing)

Doesn't

matter.

God help him.

DONNA

Well

you're not yourself, I'll give you that. You just

Oh

yes! seem to

be drifting, sweetheart.

I'm not sure about the last couple of lines. I thought Donna's big speech was a bit too

DONNA

I'm not drifting. I'm waiting.'written', so those two little grace-note lines take the edge off it. It's more natural now.

Less pretentious. It was too Disney before, and now it's more me. Plus, it's nice to see them laughing. Laughing in the dark. But I still might go back to the original, because And then the scene continues as before, until Geoff says, 'Well then. Go and find him.'Disney is good and I'm worried that die throwaway laughter undercuts the drama of To which Donna replies:a woman dreaming of the Doctor. I don't know. Also, ticking away in my head: how

is Donna over Stacy? Did she call the police? Did she leave the front door open?! Ohh, I've tried. He's... nowhere.It's a big problem. There are all sorts of scenes and lines that I could put in, but they don't lead anywhere. Nonetheless, it's bugging me.

GEOFF

Oy!

Since when did you give up? I remember you, six years old, I said, no holiday this year, so youFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2007 03:43:03 GMT toddled off, all on your own, and got on the bus! To

Strathclyde

We had police and everything!

RE: 4.1

laughing)

I've done more. Lots of trims to what I'd already written, though. Also, I changed Miss Where's she gone, then? Eh? Where's that girl?

Rattigan's name. I used it because Rattigan was the name of the family in Revelations,

Donna lies back. HIGH SHOT, pulling out on the two of them;

the old soap that I invented at Granada. It's kind of a lucky charm. But it kept making Donna and her Dad, looking up at the night sky.

me think of the villain, Professor Ratigan, in Disney's The Great Mouse Detective] Plus, I thought of a nice gag for her new name, Miss Foster. Finally, she's getting a bit of life

DONNA

You're right. I 'll do it. Just you watch me! He's out there

to her. She's a

mother. somewhere.
 And I'll find him, Dad. Even if I have to wait a
 I'm very pleased with the Doctor and Donna's meeting. (Very pleased?!
 BLOODY hundred years... I'll find him.
 DELIGHTED! If not ECSTATIC!) It's everything that I wanted it to be. It's so nice to
 write for such brilliant, skilful actors. And I revised - yes, further - the scene of Donna In
 working and working through this scene, that's what it's all about. Dad changes
 and Geoff on the hillside. After her line 'You can talk', it now
 goes: Donna's mind by inspiring her. (Interestingly, didn't I once say that
 I didn't write
 funny
 dads? Because dads aren't funny? But here he is - Geoff" is funny and sweet. This
 GEOFF proves
 that I talk bollocks.) However, I cut the two grace-note lines (Geoff: 'God help
 Oh, I'm on the mend. But you had poor old Lance, bless
 him. That mad old
 Christmas. him. Donna: 'Oh yes!'), which
 hurt, because I loved them, but they distracted from

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

this irresistible on-screen cut from Til find him' straight into Scene 48 of the Doctor in the TARDIS.

Also, today, funnily enough... I worked out what David's last words could be, one day, before his regeneration. I've stored that away.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2007 13:40:54 GMT

RE: 4.1

»I worked out what David's last words could be, one day, before his regeneration.«

What? What?! WHAT??!!!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2007 14:01:40 GMT

RE: 4.1

I'm not telling you. Ha ha ha. You've got to have something to wait for.

@yuliasha

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CHAPTER EIGHT

STILL FIGHTING IT

In which tight white pants are all the rage in Rome,
the producer of Doctor Who makes a scene in a restaurant,

and Steven Moffat says yes

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 3
SEPTEMBER 2007 15:33:52 GMT

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

'No Doctor Who return until 2010,' declares BBC News.

'Doctor Who to return for fifth series in 2010,' says the official Doctor Who website.

How's the Doctor Who crew taken the news that there will be no Series Five in

2009?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 3
SEPTEMBER 2007 15:54:06 GMT

RE: TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

The weeks of work that bloody press release has taken! The RSC was going to announce

that David is doing Hamlet, at a press conference on 11 September, so everything was

timed for then... until the RSC brochure was sent out last week, mentioning David!

Clearly, their PR is as good as ours. Numbskulls. So the news of no Doctor Who series

in 2009 has all been a bit rush-released. Phil and

Julie were going to talk to all the staff

and heads of departments calmly and properly, but then had to run around like idiots

on Friday instead, blabbing to one and all.

I m a bit locked away here, so I'm not sure how it's gone down, though Julie and Phil

say not too bad. Everyone has been aware of the rumours for ages, so I don't think anyone

is very surprised. A lot of people said, T thought so.' Many of the staff are freelance,



and this is how the freelance world works. Jess in the office was immensely pragmatic:

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT			

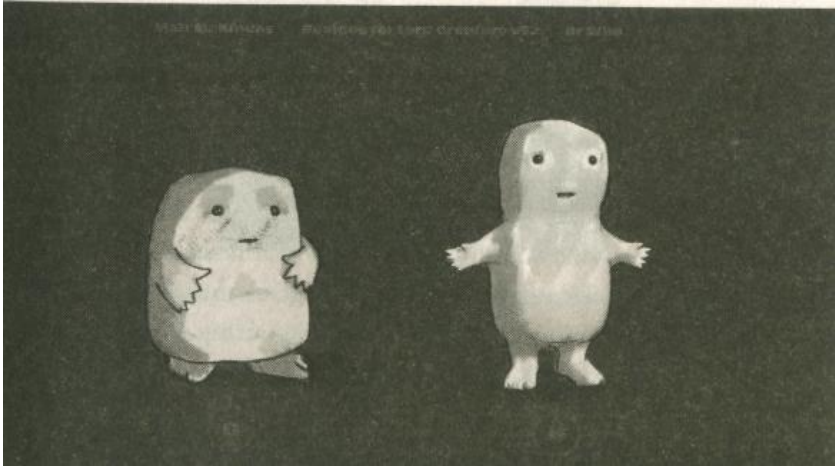
she said she's been travelling about as a freelancer for ten years now, so she'll always get chicken-and-ham pies correct? (The answer is yes.) To be honest, I have trouble with work. The most worrying thing is for the crew, the regular crew on set every day, those 'escapism' full stop. It's usually a derogatory term. Or condescending. At best, cute. I live in Cardiff. I haven't even time to ask those that I'm worried about - people like the person who goes upstairs for a couple of hours a week to write a never-published Lindsey Alford, who've moved lock, stock and barrel to Cardiff. I'm not sure where that work, or watch Star Trek, or play with a train set, actually escaping? It makes them leave them. I can't leave this desk to find out. That's terrible. But there's the promise of pastime, whether it's a hobby or a job, seem tiny and silly, when it's a vital part of your work to come, the Doctor Who Specials, maybe Torchwood, maybe Sarah Jane, as well as life. It's best summed up by that encounter with the Time-Check Woman the other bigger plans to move Casualty here when the new studio is built. Lindsey was in Bristol, week. Writing is actually my way of engaging with the world, not escaping from it. Ion Casualty, before this, so she might stay, she might move on. A freelancer's life. I'm the meet someone, I see something, and I'm breaking it all down into dialogue, and story, same. I can't think when anyone last asked me how I feel having to spend all this time in and rhythms. But that doesn't mean I'm escaping. It's not dreamland - clearly it's Cardiff, away from Manchester. It's just assumed, that's what you do. It's the distorting not, because I've built a multi-million-plus empire in South Wales out of it. Not that *Doctor Who prism that makes today's announcement seem inflated; this sort of thing is* success is a measure of how real this is, although... well, it is a measure. normal in this industry. The very word 'fiction' implies another world, literally a different place, whereas no

Exciting, though. I like change. one claims that a dedicated sportsman is escaping his life, or a chef, or a nurse. But the

Besides, it's not as lengthy a filming break as it might have been, because the BBC poor writer -- the sci-fi one especially -- is seen as running away. Bollocks. This is real,

is just desperate for a Series Five as soon as possible. And Julie is hitting problems: it's for me, and it's tough, it's fun, it's practical, and it's very, very important.

I was in just the mood to answer that!



terribly hard to raise the money for these Specials if BBC Worldwide isn't getting much in return. When there's no surrounding series to ameliorate the cost of a Special, the budget becomes frighteningly small. So, we'll still make the 2008 Christmas Special

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2007 17:14:42 GMT

at the end of Series Four, and then, it's been decided, come back in January 2009

RE: TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

to make three more Specials - probably for Christmas 2009, New Year's Day 2010,

Here's more script. I've sent this to the office, too, so that they can start to prep - or

and an Easter 2010 Special. Then Series Five will have a new production team. The just weep at -- the window-cleaner's-cradle sequence.2

show really only goes off air for 2009. And that's summed up weeks of really delicate

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2007 01:24:20 GMT

discussions. Though the plans still keep changing!

FW:

TEST AND DESIGN OF ADIPOSE

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2007 23:30:14 GMT

Look at the Adipose! The Mill sent me these to approve today. The one on the left, 'G',

RE:

ANNOUNCEMENT

one. Ha ha ha.

TODAY'S

that's the

On days like this, when the press/internet/schedule is going crazy, is writing an escape? From real life? It is an escape, quite often, for people who write in their spare time, but it's your job, your career, and what you write affects the lives and careers of lots of other people. Often, for you, writing is the very thing that you try to escape from (all those diversion techniques, etc), but was it the opposite today?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 4
SEPTEMBER 2007 01:53:57 GMT

RE: TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Tricky, that one, about escapism. Hard for me to judge, because the time I spend writing is to the detriment of my family and friends, so am I escaping them? Am I choosing to be like this? 'Escape' implies a choice. Would I be like this anyway if I worked in Greggs? Would I spend all my time getting the lattice pastry on the

' The

Doctor and Donna try to escape Adipose Industries in a window-cleaner's cradle down the side of the building - but

1 Production co-ordinator Jess Van
Niekerk. Miss Foster sabotages the
cradle during its descent, and the Doctor and Donna are left hanging...

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 5
SEPTEMBER 2007 01:28:28 GMT out of
secrecy, but because the smallest word now becomes so inflammatory. Even toRE:
TEST AND DESIGN OF

ADIPOSE

BBC One Controller. Madness. Doctor Who] That little show. So bizarre. That is so
cute! Am I the only one already thinking of the
merchandising? But to answer your
question... no, it doesn't affect my writing. Not one
jot. opportunities?
separate worlds. Doesn't intrude at all. Thankfully.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 5
SEPTEMBER 2007 01:39:29
GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2007 23:57:56 GMT

RE: TEST AND DESIGN OF
ADIPOSE

ADIPOSE Yes, I'm thinking... well, that I've lost a bloody fortune by inventing these
under a I'm going to keep going and see if I
can finish tonight. There's a Tone Meeting



contract! Talking of which...

It's all hitting the fan over Monday's press release. If I told you all the shenanigans,

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2007 00:27:57 GMT I'd have to type for 500 hours. Peter Fincham, having been talked through our plans

MORE ADIPOSEfor 2009 so many times, is reacting to the press release like it's brand new information.

episode will be responsible for so many kids wetting the bed. I hope they make Seriously! Since this stupid Queen business, he's in siege mentality.³ He's been phoning

soft toys. Or sponges! (Or squeezey stress balls. Yeah.) up Julie: 'Why are we doing this?! Why? Maybe I'm getting paranoid, but I reckon if it

escalates one more notch, just one, then his next step is to overrule Jane Tranter, magic

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2007 00:51:37 GMT a new production team out of nowhere, and have a complete new series in 2009. That's

ADIPOSE SHARP FANGhow much of an emergency it is. Interesting times.

Adipose stress ball? I'd have that! Here's the final design for the Adipose. I asked

Mill to give it one little fang, off centre, because... well, that's what makes a

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 5
SEPTEMBER 2007 01:58:10 GMT

A sharpened tusk! Like there's a tiny bit of nastiness to them. And it's funnier

RE: TEST AND DESIGN OF
ADIPOSE OF
centre. off

Scary times! What other programme in Britain has had its 2010 commission
headlined

in the newspapers? Does the media hoo-hah of the last couple of days not affect
your

writing of 4.1 at all?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 5
SEPTEMBER 2007 02:13:04 GMT

RE: TEST AND DESIGN OF ADIPOSE

Oh, it drives me mad. I don't know a lot of what's going on; Julie keeps it from
me, to protect my writing time, but tonight she was so tired and worn down and
disheartened by it all that it came out in a great big blurb. Julie's outpouring
only came

about because I happened to mention that I was worried that David personally
was

taking a lot of flak for the 'gap year', like we'd done it in order for him to do
Hamlet.

In fact, we'd decided to pause anyway, ages ago -- a decision taken with him,
yes, but

the Hamlet offer came up afterwards, when he knew that he had free time; we
decided

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO:
RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2007 02 -59-35 GMT

first. I suggested to Julie, off the cuff, that I could mention this in my column in
Doctor

IT'S 3AM. ARSE.

*Who Magazine, and Julie blanched. And then the outpouring started,
because she had*

Finished 4.1 yet? Or have

you fallen asleep at the keyboard? How's it going?

to tell me how severe things were, in order to stop me saying anything to anyone. Not

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2007 03 -15 07 GMT

3 In July 2007, at a press launch of the BBC's forthcoming autumn schedule. Fincham introduced a trailer for the documentary RE: IT'S 3AM. ARSE.

A Year with the Queen, and told journalists that the Monarch had walked out of a photo shoot 'in a huff', after being asked to

remove her tiara by photographer Annie Leibovitz. However, unknown to Fincham, the footage in the trailer had been It's going very well, thank you. The final pages are near. I suddenly sped up. How

assembled in the wrong order by production company RDF Media; the Queen had actually been walking in to the photo shoot.

Fincham admitted the error, and initially rejected calls that he should resign.

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Looks

back through the eyepiece. And then he's allis ricocheting to and fro. Of course, I'm terrified about the budget. I've spent about

500 million, so it'll have to calm down. Or I might ask them to axe BBC Three.
excited!

FX:

GEOFF'S POV. The night sky, with a LITTLE BLUE BOX

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6
SEPTEMBER 2007 03:51:18 GMT spinning across the sky.

RE: IT'S SAM. ARSE.

He

calls off, as though she might come running -

I have just typed the stage direction:

But... Donna!

It's ROSE TYLER.

Donna!

It's the flying blue box!!

Looks

back through the eyepiece.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 6
SEPTEMBER 2007 03:55:55 GMT

Stunned.

Whispers.

RE: IT'S SAM. ARSE.

What?! She's made the cut?! I thought you didn't reckon on getting Billie back for more
GEOFF (CONT'D)

Whaaaat

than one day's filming. This isn't her one day, is it?!

HIS

POV: CLOSER on the TARDIS. DONNA standing in the doorway.

Waving

at him! Behind her, THE DOCTOR, and he gives a little

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6
SEPTEMBER 2007 04:00:24 GMT

wave,

too.

IT'S 4AM. ARSE!

(CONT'D)

No, it's not her only day. But it's costing us. We've had to rearrange the schedule and But that's... that's...

pay people off. As ever, Julie sorted it all out.

One more scene to go! This is like a live transmission.

4 In some regions, the first few minutes of the original BBC One broadcast of Doctor Who 1.1 were marred by the accidental

mixing of several seconds of off-air sound from Graham Norton hosting Strictly Dance Fever.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT

And he abandons the telescope. Waves up at the sky! With
a is so lame.⁵¹ hate that scene. But I'm stuck with them. I
tried everything in my head. I
great big yahoo!

mean,
Miss Foster needs two guards or she'd look weak. (In one of those late-night
FX: THE TARDIS spins away into
space... drafts that I sent you, I upped it to
eight guards, which I then got rid of the next day,

because
two were hard enough to deal with!) I suppose they could stay with Miss
HIGH SHOT: on Geoff, on his little hillside, in the middle of
the night, waving up at the sky and whooping with
joy. Foster and be beamed up with her, but then they'd
have to fall to their deaths with her,

and
that's just not as good. It's such a great image, Miss Foster floating up with herDONE! All 58
pages. Ahh, I'm glad you were here. That was nice. children, all
on her own. Two extras would spoil it. Plus, if they're with Miss Foster,

Three more scripts to go before I can take a holiday. No, four. Maybe five.
Oh that means she never sent them to go and stop the Doctor, which is a bit
stupid. She

must
try to stop him. But what else to do? Trap them in a lift? I've done a million liftbollocks.
scenes.

And no soldier would be so daft as to use a lift in any emergency. Could theFROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 6 SEPTEMBER
2007 22:17:36 GMT

Doctor
lock the stairwells, so they're stuck inside? Equally lame. Maybe Donna could
find
a way to knock them unconscious? Nah, that's rubbish. Quite apart from the factSO...

How did the Tone Meeting go? What does everyone think of the script? How
shattered that I can't think of a way for her to do that, I really don't like that sort
of physical

violence
from the companion. Four years in, and I've rarely resorted to the Doctor orhave you been
today? I hope you're all right.

companion

having to clobber someone unconscious. I'm sort of proud of that, though

it

does write me into corners. When trapped with a guard, I much prefer to write some

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6
SEPTEMBER 2007 23:18:24 GMT

sort

of distraction - then run! Idiots punch. And punches can kill. Oh, listen to me.

RE: SO...

That's

why I was writing till gone 4am. I could work out everything else, but I've

I'm fine. Knackered. Of course, at this time of night, I begin to wake up again. I've

two

irrelevant bloody security guards going round and round and round in my head. I

still got to read Helen Raynor's Sontaran two-parter tonight, which I'll have to start

woke

up today, worrying about them. I've tried to cover it with fluffy dialogue, tried to

rewriting on Monday. We're going to cast Christopher Ryan (Mike from The Young

make

it look inbuilt in the plot; the Doctor can only electrocute them from a distance

Ones) as the Chief Sontaran. And all the Sontaran extras will be the same height, because Miss Foster has mysteriously 'wired up' the building. Why's she done that?

because they're all really short and dumpy and angry. Sontarans are trolls. It makes Turns out, she's turned it into a 'Levitation Post'. Which is bollocks. There's a bloody

sense.

big

spaceship above, perfectly capable of beaming up everyone, like spaceships do.

The 4.1 script went down well, I think. Well, Julie said that she loved it, and so did But all that dialogue is there to excuse the electrocuting-the-guards moment, a sure

Phil, though maybe they're just glad to see a script. But a Tone Meeting isn't really the sign that something has gone wrong with the plot. Adipose, Stacy, capsules, cradles, time or place for opinions, just hard facts. (We'll have a proper script session soon, levitation... and the one thing that's bugging me is the sodding security guards! It's the

of course.) My God, that team is extraordinary. That script is impossible. The cradle one bit that I don't believe.

sequence especially. Any other production team would chuck that out, but they just Also, I'm still wondering about a couple of lines that I cut, to get 59 pages to

58:

set about it, breaking it down, shot after shot, battling, wrestling, finding the right at one point, as the whole of London heads towards Emergency Parthenogenesis

way to do it. It's a thousand times more difficult than it first seems, what with the and everyone's clothes are writhing, Donna said, 'Do they have to be wearing their

Health and Safety implications. And all sorts of things you don't think of, like... with pendants?' The Doctor said no - having introduced the pendant as a trigger, it's

the cradle hanging vertically, plus a cable hanging down, which Donna is holding on unlikely that anyone would actually wear such a cheap and rubbish free gift. Well,

to, the sheer height of that is about 30 feet, beyond anything our green-screen studio maybe Suzette. 'They only have to touch the capsule once,' explained the Doctor,

can manage. Or anyone's studio! Still, they battled on. Fighting. The best team in the and it biotunes into them.' Nonsense, but sort of believable nonsense. And yet, in the

world. I worry that there's going to come a nasty moment, when all the costs are added middle of a crisis, with all those Adipose about to burst out of Roger and Suzette and

up. Big decisions to come, I fear. Nice Man and 497 others... who gives a damn about those dull explanatory speeches?

As for me, I'll read the script back tomorrow night, in Manchester. But I think I love

it. It feels good. I'm pleased that it's done. That feels miraculous. Most of all, though,

5

The Doctor electrocutes Miss Foster's two security guards, just enough to stun them, by rewiring Adipose Industries (Miss

I'm bothered by those two guards; the way that they get electrocuted in the doorway Foster has wired up the whole building, to convert it into a 'Levitation Post' so that she and her Adipose children can levitate

up

to the Adiposian spaceship)... and the guards fall to the ground unconscious.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT

----- Text message from: Russell-----
----- Sent: 13-Sep-2007 09:46-----
----- A
mule! Ha ha ha, how brilliant. Thanks for letting me know. Big kiss to
----- Francois Pandolfo. In a strictly professional
way.-----

----- Text message from: Russell
----- Sent: 13-Sep-2007 23:03

----- Hope
all went well at Cinecitta today. It's very odd sitting here while

abroad. I feel like the caretaker of a school.FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO:
RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2007 18:47:34 GMT

----- Text
message from: Ben----- Sent: 13-Sep-2007 23:22-----
----- Filming went well. We're all on a night out in Rome. It's like St
Trinian's on----- tour! Everyone has worked so hard
today. How are things in the UK?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 10
SEPTEMBER 2007 16:56:14 GMT Text message
from: Russell

13-Sep-2007 23:43-----
----- It's all go here. We've just told Burn and Naoko
that they won't be in the----- third series of
Torchwood, because we're killing off Owen and Tosh,-----
----- Madness in two countries simultaneously.-----

----- Text message from: Ben
----- Sent:
14-Sep-2007 00:24

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 10
SEPTEMBER 2007 21:57:08 GMT There's a rat in our
restaurant. Phil is standing on the table. The producer
of

Doctor Who1. Oh, now he's asking for a discount. He says it's taken two...
.....
years off his life.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 11
SEPTEMBER 2007 23:49:27 GMT

message from: Russell

14-Sep-2007 00:31..

41. That'll make him cross. Hey, if I were in a

restaurant, scared of a rat, I'd cling to...
ooh, Francois maybe?.....

Text
message from: Ben

Sent:
14-Sep-2007 00:35

Text message from: Ben
I'll
suggest it to Phil.

Sent: 13-Sep-2007 09:08
'And... action!' Filming in Rome has begun. It's looking fantastic.
There's a

message from: Russell
mule on set, and chickens, and I'm standing on a replica Roman toilet
to get

14-Sep-200713:49
a good view.

to The Mill's list, we're 150 FX days over on 4.1.1 have to

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EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

not
good enough. And then what? The Doctor and Donna can't just run away. The

Text message from: Ben

Doctor
would have to find some clever way to outfox Miss Foster and the guards, but

Sent: 15-Sep-2007 00:50

then
that raises the question: why didn't the Doctor do that in the first place, instead

It's the night shoot at Cinecitta! Is Francois' tunic supposed to be so short?

of
trying to escape via the cradle? So, um...

Text message from: Russell

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER
2007 0 1:46:33 GMT

Sent: 15-Sep-2007 00:55

We spent a long time MAKING Louise Page shorten it. Oh,
the power!

RE: ROMAN HOLIDAY

The
rooftop dilemma! Don't you usually get around these things by having the Doctor
talk
to the villain over intercoms or TV screens?

Text message from: Ben

Sent:

15-Sep-2007

01:02

FROM: RUSSELL T

DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2007
02:02:16 GMT

Colin Teague is worried about the shot of Francois climbing through
the

RE: ROMAN HOLIDAY

window of Lucius' quarters. Urn -- we'll see everything! Have you
done
I just read the script again. I suppose the Doctor and Donna could
meet Miss Foster

this on purpose? Louise is not happy. She's insisting that Francois
wears
and the guards for the vital dialogue in the darkened sales-cubicles
room. That's quite

underwear.

a

good setting. Bit of space. Better than a corridor. In some ways, the heart of Miss

Foster's

empire.

Text

message

from:

Russell

And how to escape? It just struck

me: the Doctor has a sonic screwdriver and Miss

Sent:

15-Sep-2007

01:09

Foster's sonic pen.6 What happens

when you hold two sonic devices together? I'll tell

Exactly as I planned. Who d'you think wrote the climbing-
through-the- you what. You get wibbly-wobbly vibrations and guards clutch their
ears for long

window scene? Ha ha ha. I'm sure the Pyroviles invented
tight white pants.

enough

to enable you to escape! That's what happens, because I say so. I hate using

the

sonic screwdriver as a solution, but that's what comes of making this an action-

I'll issue a pink page to that effect.

adventure

series with a hero who doesn't carry a gun. Small price to pay. The episode

has

gone to great lengths to give the Doctor two sonic devices at the same time, so it'll

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 18
SEPTEMBER 2007 23:50:05 GMT

look

like I planned it all along.

ROMAN HOLIDAY

Are you back from Rome? The rushes are amazing. Oh, but here's tonight's script

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2007
23:41:24 GMT

problem (this one has me stumped)... the one thing that we can't afford to shoot

LATEST

4.1

on 4.1 is the Doctor and Donna and Miss Foster having their conversation on the

We

saw the half-finished FX on 4.X today. The Titanic sailing over Buckingham Palace

rooftop, with the Doctor and Donna already in the stationary cradle. As soon as the
brilliant, we stood up and clapped! Amazing. We also realised, for the first time,
cradle falls, we're fine, bizarrely. We can afford the stunt, the Adipose, the End Of The
since the BBC's trouble with the Queen, it's probably a very good thing that we
Sodding World, but not that confrontation scene. (The reasons are too dull to go into.
trash the Palace after all. Phew.

It involves the number of nights -- just one, apparently -- for which we can afford a
I've been tweaking 4.1 today, to lose some more FX days and in the light of
crane and an actual cradle, as opposed to the cradle that we'll build in the studio for
from Julie and... well, YOU, actually! One of them is your note. When you
the stunt sequence against green screen.) Of all the things that I expected to be cut
about the coincidence of so many of the 500 victims being in such close
(which included the entire cradle sequence), I never expected that. The Doctor's whole
I realised that I'd made it 500 because initially I'd planned to kill them
confrontation with the enemy! Where the plot is explained! Bollocks.
have them all do a Stacy rip-apart, before I decided that was just gruesome and
So... they escape to the roof, Miss Foster chasing, cut around the actual moment
And expensive. (I'd thought 500 was a reasonable massacre!) Now they
of descent to avoid the precise mechanism, so the Doctor and Donna are already
heading down when Miss Foster nixes the equipment, and then we go into the stunt

3
The
sonic screwdriver is a tool used by the Doctor since 1968 serial Fury from
the Deep. It's most common function is to

sequence as written, minimal changes. But then the Doctor and Donna run
through operate virtually any door lock, mechanical or electronic,
but it has also been used for everything from repairing equipment to
landmines. In 4.1, Miss Foster has a sonic pen... until the Doctor pinches it.

the building, meet Miss Foster, and have that pivotal conversation... in a corridor? Or on a stairwell? That's a very flat, lame setting compared to a rooftop at night. It's just

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EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2007 19:03:04 GMT
don't die, though, so I've upped it to 10,000 people, making the threat much bigger.

RE:

SARAH JANE So that little wonder of yours was brilliant. Thank you.

He might

say no. I wonder. For starters, he's got kids and a wife. He works with

Hartwood,

which is practically his company. And now he's writing stuff like Tintin for
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2007 00:57:00 GMT

Spielberg,

his agent might clobber him if he goes and does a TV show.⁷ Plus, if someone
RE: LATEST 4.1
else takes over from me, they'd be begging scripts off Steven anyway, so he'd still get to
Now, that's got to be worth ten per cent?
write Doctor Who. All the fun, none of the pain.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2007 01:03:52 GMT

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2007 00:54:36 GMT

RE: LATEST 4.1

RE:

SARAH JANE

Ha ha ha. No.

I just

got a midnight e-mail from A. N. Other Writer. Having trouble with 'the basic

linear

causality' of an episode. Basic linear causality?! Do you see the crap that writers talk?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2007 13:26:21 GMT

Really,

though, if you think of a script in terms like that, how the hell are you ever going

RE: LATEST 4.1

to get

anything written?

I'm so behind with the 4.4 rewrites. I quite like what I'm thinking: lovely stuff with

Donna returning home, having travelled in time and space; the Doctor's new attitude
Text message from: Russell

to UNIT (he doesn't like them -- men with guns -- he wouldn't); the Doctor knocking
Sent: 27-Sep-2007 09:05

out a Sontaran with a tennis ball! It all feels good, but it's a lot of work.
Guess who we've got for Miss Foster? Sarah Lancashire!

Also, I forgot to tell you, I walked to Tesco yesterday, thinking about Gwen and Ianto defending the Torchwood Hub from advancing Daleks in 4.12! Daleks in the
Text message from: Ben
Hub! I was almost hyperventilating with excitement.
Sent: 27-Sep-2007 09:15

Brilliant

casting! That's going to be one sexy mother foster!

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2007 18:04:40 GMT

SARAH
JANE
FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 2007 20:53:31 GMT

I've just seen Lis Sladen on the CBBC channel, being interviewed by a cactus.

4.4

COMPLETED!

Another

script done! Yes, I've finished 4.4. It's like a bloody production line. Well, it

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2007 18:26:40 GMT

production line. is a

RE: SARAH JANE I
admitted to Julie today that Tom MacRae's Episode 8 simply isn't right. Tom's

A Spanish cactus at that. Or was it Mexican? What happened to good-looking CBBC script is
good, and we could make it great, but I don't think it can ever be great enough.
presenters? It's
misconceived. This is entirely my fault: I don't like the concepts I gave him, and I

Tonight, Jane Tranter and Julie Gardner are having dinner with Steven Moffat. The
don't like the overall tone of both 4.7 and 4.8 being comparatively light, fun episodes.

future starts here! Mind you, what if he says no? (He won't actually give an

answer Two in a row. I'm left with the prospect of having to write a replacement script myself.

tonight. Months of negotiations, etc.) But Christ alive, what happens then? I can't But I've no time. I'd have about three days! Even if I could do it in three days, I'd lose

even bear to think about it. more time than that - for recovery. (Julie said today, "This is the only job in writing

where you actually talk about having Recovery Days!') We're going to wait a week, to

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 24 SEPTEMBER 2007 18:36:15 GMT get 4.5 dealt with, and then decide what to do about 4.8...

RE: SARAH JANE

Of course he won't say no. He won't, will he? Who'd say no? It's the best job in the world.

7

Moffat

has scripted The Adventures of Tintin: Secret of the Unicorn (scheduled for a 2011 release) for directors Steven

Spielberg

and Peter Jackson.

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EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SATURDAY 6 OCTOBER 2007
00:14:06 GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY
28 SEPTEMBER 2007 16:11:31 GMT

PETER FINCHAM'S ARSE THE MOFF

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 28
SEPTEMBER 2007 16:21:45 GMT

message from: Russell RE: THE
MOFF
7-Oct-2007 11:10 Davison
Day! And I'm sat in the flat rewriting the bloody Sontarans.

fun.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 28
SEPTEMBER 2007 16:30:37 GMT t
message from: Ben

RE: THE
MOFF
7-Oct-2007 11:22

----- You're not coming?! Your inner
fanboy must be screaming a lament. Don't be
----- daft. You've got to pop in.
History in the making!

ever make trousers like
that?
message from: Russell

7-Oct-2007 11:45

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. FRIDAY 5 OCTOBER 2007 11:32:10 GMT

If the universe implodes because two Doctors meet, at least I'll be a

away. Oh, maybe I'll come along for a bit this afternoon.

PETER FINCHAM'S ARSE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 2007 04:33:42 GMT

FINISHED 4.5!

FROM.: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 5 OCTOBER 2007 21:32:17 GMT

RE: PETER FINCHAM'S ARSE

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 2007 12:59:42 GMT

—
FINISHED 4.5!

RE:

it might kill me.«

8 Moffat wrote Time Crash, an eight-minute mini-episode of Doctor Who, for the BBC's Children in Need telethon. Broadcast

in November 2007, it depicted an encounter between the Tenth Doctor and his former, fifth incarnation, played by Peter

Davison.

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EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

and anyone on the floor, hands-on making it. Maybe that sounds hypocritical, directors
Upside: it might not. because I know it's easier said than done, but they have to concentrate on what they're
How was the 4.4/4.5 Tone Meeting? making now, without confusing it.

I do find it easy to divorce my two roles. With my producer's hat on (it's lemon), if FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 8 OCTOBER 2007 22:19:08 GMT a scene becomes impossible or expensive or is simply dropped on the day because theyRE: **FINISHED** 4.5! ran out of time, then I can score a great big line through it. Even if I loved it. I won'tIt might not? Yes, I like that. The thing is, it really could. Writing 24 pages yesterday moan or bleat or feel any substantial regret. It's something that writers in this countrytook me 80 cigarettes. I will be able to say, honestly, that the Sontarans killed me. need to be trained in, like in the US. We still cling to that notion of the writer-eccentric

The Tone Meeting was good, but I was so tired. I got a bit tetchy. Actually, I got (the slippers, the attic, the cardigan), which is a bloody nightmare on set. That sort of a bit tetchy with good reason. One of the funny things about rewrites is, a lot of writer kicks up a fuss if a character is wearing a white shirt instead of a blue one. That people aren't very good at deleting the old drafts from their heads. That's a particular sort of writer shouldn't be allowed near filming. Mind you, that writer-eccentric does problem when they're the producer or director! It's a really subtle, insidious thing allow you to get away with murder. Writers are allowed, professionally, to be stropky, that creeps in and makes scripts, or the production of scripts, indistinct. It drives and weird, and angry, and demanding, and petulant, and oversexed, and drunk. As me bananas when people start quoting from old drafts, in which the Sontarans had long as your writing is good, that behaviour is sort of revered. Even expected. We're different motivations. It's more pernicious when it creeps into tiny, important details allowed to misbehave, because it's seen as creative, like it's part of the job. Rubbish! of character and backstory. Clarity and definition can go out of the window. That So many writers get credited as execs these days, because that's the goal, career-wise, sort of creep and bleed is the reason - no, one of the reasons -- why so much drama is for a writer. Half of them -- most of them -- don't know what exec'ing actually is, and neither here nor there. No definition. Drafts upon drafts. Muddling along. couldn't do it, and don't want to. It cheapens the title. A while ago, a writer-friend of

Worth it in the end, though. For all its improvised, battling, freefall blundering,

I mine, a powerful writer -- who shall remain nameless -- was demanding an exec credit on a big ITV show of his, so he phoned me up, asking what jobs I did to earn that think 4.5 is a rather marvellous episode. Best of all, it ends with a fantastic Doctor credit. I listed them all: casting actors, working with directors, production meetings scene: that final confrontation with the Sontarans on their spaceship. I think that's with heads of department, rushes, Edits, Dubs, etc. He said, 'I don't do any of that.' I bloody excellent. It's really hard to find new things for the Doctor, especially new said, 'Sod off, then!' But he got his exec credit anyway, without taking on any of those climaxes, so I'm really chuffed with that. Hoo-bloody-ray. duties. That's what pisses me off.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 9 OCTOBER 2007 00:36:25 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 10 OCTOBER 2007 12:51:53 GMT

RE: FINISHED 4.5!

WORK, LESS MAYBE **MORE**

But haven't we both found it difficult to delete old drafts from our heads? Or you I must update you on the Maybe, although it feels wrong calling it that now. 'Maybe' wouldn't have got tongue-tied when you bumped into [Miss X] in Oxford Street was nice and mystical back in February, when I was planning, not writing. Now I back in March, because you still had Penny-as-played-by-[Miss X] in your mind. And think the word is just 'Work'. It can't fluctuate so much any more. I have to make neither of us can read 4.1 without a certain pang when Penny pops up. That said, choices. Fix it. Write it. there's a difference, I know, between what we natter about in these e-mails and what's One terrible thing is happening - and I can't stop it bleeding into my thoughts.

required from folk at Tone Meetings. When you're wearing your writer's hat (I imagine
Howard
Attfield, who plays Donna's dad, has been ill. As you know, he's had cancer
it's a beret, with pink tassels), old and new drafts are fluctuating in the quantum
and
chemo. The agent told us about it, but said that Howard was more than happy
state of Maybe. However, in your executive producer's hat (a pith helmet, I reckon,
to do
Series Four. And already I'm using that, in the story. That sounds terrible, but
with solar panels that power a miniature fan to keep you cool), you need to be more
it's
what happens; I start weaving it in. That, I think, has been part of the Donna and
disciplined. Is that true? At this stage in production, is it easy enough to divorce your
Geoff
closeness that's crept into their scenes together in 4.1 and 4.4/4.5. (Look at me,
role as writer from your role as executive producer?
absolving
myself of blame by saying 'crept into', giving it a life of its own!) But now
that
we've started shooting 4.1 and Howard is on set... blimey, he's ill. He's not had
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 9
OCTOBER 2007 22:00:36 GMT
chemotherapy;
he's having it. Phil was talking to him about his scenes in 4.4/4.5, and
RE: FINISHED 4.5!
I didn't mean that writers should delete old drafts from their minds; just producers and

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT			

DOCTOR & WOMAN What are youHoward said, lightly, "That's if I'm still here.'
 He's dying. That lovely man is dying. doing, what's inside you, what is it...?
 And there it is feeding back into the scripts and onto screen. It can't not. That scene
 of Donna and Geoff on the hillside is utterly exquisite. Wonderfully shot.
 Beautifully That's hard to shoot. That actress would have to learn the entire script.
 She wouldn'tacted by Catherine and Howard. Each draft and redraft over every little line of
 that just say the Doctor's words, she'd say everyone's, no matter how fast it gets.
 Incrediblescene was so worth it. It's one of best scenes that we've ever shot. But if you
 add moments where all the other characters are talking at once, and she sort of
 manages tothis knowledge about Howard to what you're watching... well, it's heartbreaking.
 I say everyone's words at once, like talking in tongues. It's a real possession story.
 It's the

tension
 of it that I love. The weirdness. Even the technical difficulty of shooting thiswatched the
 rushes and cried.

becomes
 fascinating. All that production-tension creeping onto the screen. Also, it's

To be blunt: how do we plan ahead? What do we do? Talk about the Maybe being in
 key
 to the Doctor -- or David's Doctor -- because he uses words so well, and this is all
 a state of flux! I don't know what to do. Howard is supposed to be in 4.11 and

about
 him losing his speech.

4.12/4.13, but... ouch. I'm writing his illness into the story (can I do that? Should
 I?), that Donna has to face the death of her father. That she always was. That she
 went But how does it end? That, in truth, is why I'm a bit scared of commissioning
 myself

looking for the Doctor on the day that Geoff was diagnosed. That she's running
 away here. Dragging those endings out of my head, that's what hurts, that's what
 makes me

-- and will, one day, have to walk back and face it. And then Donna
 Noble grows up. smoke and burn. Last week, when I was staring at 4.5 and had
 no idea how it ended,

I can't talk about this too much more. I'm sorry, Ben. It feels obscene. It feels it
 was a great big raw screaming hole. It was a mindless panic. And it had to be fixed
 fascinating. It's sort of too fascinating. Does that make
 sense? by Monday. It's horrible, looking into that. The blank space

of an unknown ending.

Elsewhere, this mysterious 4.8 that I haven't got time for has been building in my head. When I talk about being exhausted and recovering from a script, what I really mean is

head. It had taken a fair old shape, when I happened to see Jeepers Creepers 2 on ITV recovering, physically, from going through that fear. I'm not even going to qualify that

the other night... and it was exactly what I had in mind. Everyone trapped on a bus with an 'Oh, how pretentious', though my fingers are dying to type a self-deprecating

bus, with a monster outside. They stole my idea! Five years ago! Those time-travelling qualifiers. No matter how difficult 4.11 and 4.12/4.13 are, I know how they end, so I've

Hollywood bastards. My version is set on an alien planet. Donna is busy moonbathing, somewhere to head for. But I've no such luxury with 4.8. It's tempting me forward, but

so the Doctor goes off on a tourist trip, in a tank-like bus thing. But we don't see the repelling me at the same time.

outside. No models, no CGI, apart from an establisher of the planet. This, literally,

takes place on one set -- inside the bus -- which will have to seal off its windows, so FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 11 OCTOBER 2007 15:10:56 GMT

let's say there's a big old powerful X-raying sun outside. So it's a box. It's a show set **RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE**

in a box. That'll help our budgets right now. The box sets off on its journey, with the I hadn't realised that things were quite that serious for Howard. That's terrible. I only

Doctor and five or six other interesting people on board, but then it breaks down. met him briefly on set for The Runaway Bride. He seemed to be having a good time.

There Is Something Outside. (Or is there?) They're trapped. Forty minutes of fear! Very happy. Very twinkly. I really hope I see him again. It seems fitting that he should

Never leaving the box. God only knows how or what happens. I don't think we've the influence his character's path, and Donna's, to some extent.

money for a monster, so it's sort of psychological terror. Hey, I saw the report in the Daily Star the other day, that Billie and everyone is

At the heart of this, I've one idea that keeps nagging, because it feels so

attractive, coming back for the series finale. How the hell do they find out this stuff?

and unnerving, and plain terrifying. Whatever's outside the box, one woman inside becomes possessed by it - and she repeats everything that you say. She has no speech FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 11 OCTOBER 2007 19:51:55 GMT

of her own; she just repeats everything. All the time. You know how it drives you mad RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

when people repeat what you say? When kids do it? Imagine that not stopping. Forty Heaven knows! We're very worried about that. It's a top-level leak. Almost no one

minutes of it, inside a box, with the lights failing and the heat rising, and the paranoia knows the full size of these plans. But what do we do? Suspect everyone? There's

building, and this woman (I like the name Sky), this woman with wild, staring eyes, nothing we can do. Some sly little shit will have to be hot with their tiny victory. But

will not stop. Worse than that - better than that - her repetition starts to synchronise! talking to the Daily Star...! How dumb is that? At least The Sun has readers.

Her repeats get closer and closer to your words until they're overlapping. She's saying words at exactly the same time as you! Speeches would be laid out as:

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 12
OCTOBER 2007 20:54:46 GMT

message from: Russell

13-Oct-2007 23:49RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

weird to think of everyone filming on a Saturday night. I don't think Poor
Howard. It's looking bad. We're trying to bring his 4.4/4.5 scenes forward to film

done this before. It robs me of my martyr status - I'm not alone! *next week,
plus any scenes from 4.11 that I can write in advance. It's that bad.*

goes it?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 13
OCTOBER 2007 03:33:46 GMT

Text

message from: BenRE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

Sent:

14-Oct-2007 00:30Oh well, I started 4.8. Like an idiot. I couldn't resist. I'm giving myself
this weekend. If

I

was interviewing Sarah Lancashire when you texted. She said that you
can convince myself by Sunday night that there's a story in this Space Bus (I'm calling

scripts

are 'non-negotiable' and 'uncompromising', and that she 'believes the Space
Bus Crusader Five) - and a story that I can complete in time - then I'll keep every
single beat'. The bribe worked, then? going. Prep on 4.8 starts on Monday, so that's a
handy deadline. If it doesn't work... well,

I can keep it as a pet project; something will happen to it one day. Every idea gets
used
Text message from: Russell somewhere,
eventually.

Sent:

14-Oct-2007 02:04

that's nice of her. I've known her for years. Always wanted to work with
her

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 13
OCTOBER 2007 12:31:17 GMT

now she's an evil alien Supernanny! Who'd have thought?

RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

CRUSADER FIVE IS GO! I'm leaving for Newport in an hour, but I've just sat here
Text message from: Ben

and read what you've written of 4.8, so now I'm running late. Obviously, I'm Invisible
Sent: 14-Oct-2007 02:07

Ben, so I can't tell you whether or not I enjoyed it. But I did enjoy it. More's the point,
How goes Crusader Five? You have to work the number 50 into the script

you sound as though you're enjoying this one. I'm on set tonight, through the night,
somewhere. Couldn't it be Crusader 50 instead?

for Miss Foster's confrontation with the Doctor and Donna, but send me more and I'll
read it when I get back to the hotel at 6am.
Text message from:
Russell

14-Oct-2007 02:10

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 13
OCTOBER 2007 13:11:20 GMT
Oh, I forgot that!
Right, the Space Bus is called Crusader 50 now.

RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE
call. Good

I'm glad you enjoyed it. I'm still not sure. I've chosen the hardest thing to write, which

is eight people all in one scene at the same time. That's why most drama consists of two-

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 14
OCTOBER 2007 03:50:33 GMT

handlers. Much easier. The sheer effort of keeping eight characters on the boil, while not
RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

forgetting anyone, but not delaying things by laboriously giving everyone their turn,
is This is hard work. Just laying it out on the page, clearly explaining what's happening

technically one of the hardest things to write.
and timing it right. I think it works, it's scary,
the concept is scary, but... I just don't

Have fun on set. That episode is looking wonderful. I swear, the scene where the know. My brain is bleeding. Good night.

Doctor and Donna see each other through their respective windows is The Funniest

Thing Ever. Certainly, the funniest thing that I've written for ages. You write and FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER 2007 12:07:05 GMT

write and write, hoping to hit something that funny, and sometimes, rare times, you RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

get there. Catherine plays a blinder. (She texted me afterwards to say, 'I'm petitioning Chatting to Phil on set last night, he mentioned Howard. He said that depending on

them to bring back Give Us a Clue.') And then David raises his game and gets even how you write him into later episodes, it might be worth recasting - and reshooting

funnier. Oh, I'm happy. the scene on the hillside - though Phil did stress that he really didn't want to. Is that

And Sarah Lancashire was born to play a villain. an option, do you think?

I shared a car back to the hotel with Sarah. I hadn't realised that her dad was a writer,

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EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

said
that I wanted to rewrite it with Donna's grandad instead, so Howard and family Geoffrey Lancashire, who wrote episodes of Coronation Street years before Sarah was

won't
have to see a new Geoff on screen -- and Phil suggested Bernard Cribbins in it. She's another one fascinated by what makes writers tick. Her theory is that you

Donna's
grandad is the newspaperman from Voyage of the Damned. We phoned up have to be slightly unhinged to be a writer. 'All the best writers are mad,' she said.

Bernard's
agent... and he's free! He loved his day with us, so he's on board. Well, not Then again, it was 5am, so she could have been talking in tongues and I'd have duly quite -- money to sort out and all that -- but technically the deal is done. Christ, this nodded.
show
can move fast sometimes. That was a blizzard of phone calls and e-mails. So,

today,
I've rewritten Geoff as Wilf. The newspaperman was Stan in 4.X, but I like Wilf FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER 2007
12:22:16 GMT

better
for a longer-running part. His name is never said on screen in 4.X, so all we have RE: MORE
WORK, LESS MAYBE
to do is
change him to Wilf in the end credits. My brain is buzzing. This Space Bus script is driving me mad. Perhaps in a good way. I
It's spooky, though, because that hillside scene is one of the few that I obsessed woke up with it whirring and whizzing through my head. I wish I had a Dictaphone,
over in our e-mails -- and here it is cropping up again. Of course, we're faced with these I could babble out all the ideas. I'll keep going till tonight, then decide whether
outrageous coincidence of the Doctor meeting the grandfather of the woman with to abandon it or keep going. Or maybe I'll send it to Julie and Phil to decide. It's
whom he fought the Racnoss, the same woman who's about to track him down. Phil about to turn into a Balloon Debate -- who to throw out of Crusader 50? I used to
suggested reshooting the Christmas scene so that Bernard didn't appear twice. I said, love Balloon Debates in school. Some kid would stand there droning, 'I am Florence
'No, let's make it the same man.' It's sort of funny. I've just rewritten 4.4/4.5 as well Nightingale and I saved lots of lives,' some other kid would come back with 'I am
(it's been a hell of a day), in order to change the dad to the grandad. At the Nobles' Winston Churchill and I won the war,' and I'd just be sitting there thinking, we throw
house, Wilf recognises the Doctor, the Doctor recognises him, Donna realises that the someone out of a. balloon?! Brilliant! (Am I showing my age? Do they still have Balloon
Doctor and Wilf have met before, and Sylvia still has to recognise the Doctor from the Debates? Do you know what I'm on

about?) wedding in The Runaway Bride,
while handily adding that Wilf wasn't there because

Bless Sarah Lancashire, she's always been dying to write herself-- so tempted by
it, he had Spanish flu! That's the maddest scene ever. We could just ignore all these
links,

after years of watching her dad, who's well remembered and much loved in
Manchester but we've a dedicated audience - not the fan-audience, but the other 7.9
million - so

-- and I used to nag her to start, but maybe she's wise. Maybe it's better,
staying away. I think this casting needs to be acknowledged. And the fact that it's not
any old actor,

Who needs it? But she really is clever, isn't she? Much underestimated. You don't get
to it's Bernard bloody Cribbins, sort of allows the madness.

that status in the industry without a keen
mind. Nonetheless, that fanboy part of me does
have his teeth slightly on edge, so I'm going

Poor Howard. That's the final option, to recast and reshoot. Oh, but that would
be to take care of it in 4.11. When Rose is trying to get Donna to put history back on
terrible. (A lot easier for us, though.) It doesn't bear thinking
about. course, she's going to say something like, 'You met the Doctor, then
your grandfather

did,
then you found the Doctor for a second time. That's not just coincidence. It's like

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 15
OCTOBER 2007 18:03:16 GMT the universe was trying to bind you to
the Doctor. To stop this [the parallel world]

from
happening.' That's a fair bit of nonsense, and posits the universe, or at least

RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

destiny,
as a sentient force, but it's kind of spooky. I like that. At the very least, it's

What do Julie and Phil make of the Space Bus episode? Is it going to be yours or Tom

saying,
'We know this is barmy.' The only time I try to rule out huge coincidence is

MacRae's? And have you warned Tom
yet? when it actually changes the plot. But
here it doesn't. It's just detail.

Yesterday
continued to be weird. If my favourite thing in 4.1 is the hillside scene,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 16

OCTOBER 2007 18:56:35 GMT

least favourite is those bloody guards being electrocuted in the doorway, isn't it? I
my
RE: MORE WORK, LESS
MAYBE never could think of a
solution. Well, at 3.36am -- I noted the time -- my phone rings.

They love it. Phew. However, in 4.1 news, Howard is so frail, he's broken his leg, so
his They re on a night shoot -- oh God, red alert -- so I grab my phone and, sure enough,
wife, bless her, phoned up and admitted, 'I think we'd better stop.' He's definitely
out. it's James Strong. Oh no, what's wrong?

The terrible thing is, we couldn't claim insurance before for filming any replacement
scenes, because we'd known that he was ill and took the risk. No insurance. But
now JAMES

David's asking, about these guards, the ones
that he's broken his leg, we have insurance money for a brand new hillside scene.
That's who get electrocuted. How does the Doctor know where
weird. But we needed the money.

Yesterday, in the space of 12 hours, after deciding that Howard couldn't continue, I

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE CHAPTER
EIGHT: STILL FIGHTING IT

they are, to electrocute
them? JAMES

RUSSELL

Well, he doesn't. He's discovered the wiring that Miss
Foster's used to convert the building into a Levitation
Post, and he uses that to electrocute all the doorways.

Night. JAMES Night then.

JAMES

Ah. Right.

And don't you love the way
that I made myself sound good there? But it just
(pause) They
aren't coming through a doorway.

proves something (poor
James, it's not his fault at all): if something is a problem, it'll
*always be a problem
unless you fix it. Like the best problems, it comes back to haunt*

RUSSELL you - on the page, on the
shoot, in the Edit, on transmission. I failed to fix that.

Right. Why not?

Clearly failed. It would always
have gone wrong, somehow. It was wrong from the
start. I bleated about it to
you, but didn't actually do anything. Lesson learnt. Well,
The doorways here are rubbish. maybe.

RUSSELL

FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 17 OCTOBER 2007 17:11:03
GMT

Oh-kaaay. So how do they get electrocuted? In your

RE: MORE WORK, LESS

MAYBE

version?

JAMES They
yet. I sat with it last night and just couldn't get into it.

come through a sort of archway.
script, if you're not devoted, and hooked, and scared, and

RUSSELL
a bunch of boring people stuck in a box. Hopefully, this

So the archway electrocutes them?
get in the mood and launch myself into it. I can finish it

JAMES

Yes.
Bernard Cribbins. It turns out that he thought he was

RUSSELL But
companion! So it looks as though that's about to go
they don't actually touch anything?

JAMES

FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 18 OCTOBER 2007 04:17:59
GMT

No.

MAYBE

RUSSELL
belated birthday present, Ben. (God, I'm cheap.) Happy
And you've already shot this?
it?) You old man.

JAMES

Yes.

(pause)
FROM: BENJAMIN
COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 18 OCTOBER 2007 13:43:38
GMT

The doorways really are rubbish.
MAYBE

RUSSELL
CREEPY episode! It scared the crap out of me. What's it

No more Space Bus script

If you're not into that
passionate, it just reads like
isn't true. I've just got to
tonight, I reckon.

But now I've got to phone
travelling in the TARDIS! As a
bollocks-up.

RE: MORE WORK, LESS

It's finished! See 4.8 as a
birthday! (It is the 17th, isn't

RE: MORE WORK, LESS

Thanks, Russell. That's one

So the Doctor electrified every single archway in the building, with such strong electricity that anyone passing through one would get electrocuted. Hey, I just thought - the monster knocking on the outside of the Space Bus has no name. Yes, that makes it creepier, but mightn't Gary Russell's head going to do to the kids? the Space Bus has no

explode? How is he going to enter it into his Great Big Encyclopedia Of Everything In

JAMES *Doctor Who Ever?*
Won't somebody think of Gary Russell's mind?!

Yes! That works!

RUSSELL ROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 18 OCTOBER 2007 21:02:29
GMT

Good. Oh, and James? You tell David that's your version. **RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE**

Not mine. Your typing sounds somehow... older. Have you aged suddenly? Ha ha ha.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

I'm coming down off that 4.8 rush. I keep saying things to people like 'I'm not

tired', but I think that's bravado. Vanity, I suppose. I want to say 'I'm fine' and sound

impressive, but this morning I found myself hobbling to the shops. Hobbling! And

wheezing. My legs aching. My knee hurting. My ear's a bit deaf. I'm chronic. Bollocks

I'm not tired. I watched old people walking past in the Bay, faster than me. Still, 4.8

seems to have gone down a treat. Ed Thomas is very excited about building the Crusader

50 set. And I think I should call the episode Midnight." What do you think? Or Crossing

Midnight, but maybe that's pretentious. David has been sent the script tonight. I'm

slightly dreading his response. All those lines! He's going to kill me.

It's the opposite of Voyage of the Damned, that script. In Voyage, a group of survivors

are wonderful. In Midnight, they're awful. Humans at their worst. All paranoid and

terrified. Much closer to the real world - or my view of the world. That's partly why

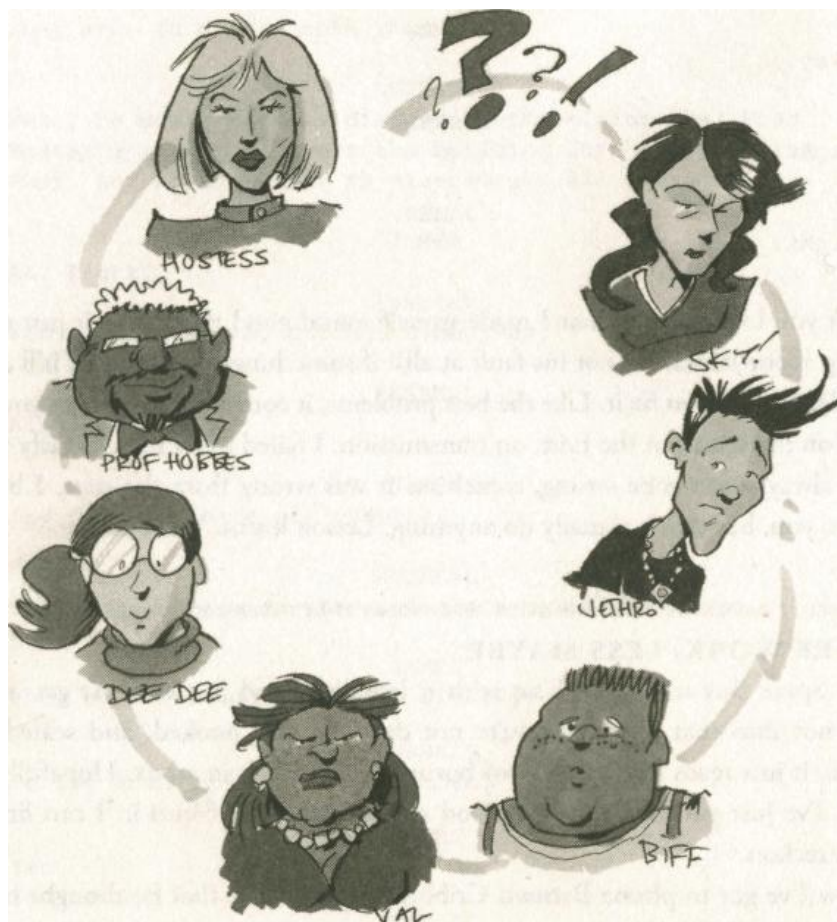
it was so hard to write; the language is very stripped down, there are very few jokes or

conversational riffs, all those things that I normally rely on. The characters haven't even

got much backstory, which is odd, because Trapped People Dramas usually rely on that.

But this one's about who they are now. Very bleak.

9 4.8 is set on a planet called Midnight.



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CHAPTER NINE

STEVEN MOFFAT'S

THIGHS

In which the Doctor gains a wife, Donna's fate is sealed,

and The Guardian portrays Russell as giggling,

primping and lipsticked

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 19
OCTOBER 2007 01:16:49 GMT

RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

4.1 is cursed! Last night's filming had been rescheduled from its original date, because

of the rain two nights ago, so we ended up shooting the Donna-goes-to-the-TARDIS-

with-her-hatbox scene up against a nightclub, with BAM BAM, BAM music and

crowds of drunk Welsh, literally, yelling. Very loud. On and on and on. The offstage

noise is terrible. With David and Catherine soldiering on bravely. Take after take after

take. Today, David sent Phil, Julie and me an e-mail, complaining - well, complaining

is too strong a word for him. He was just genuinely sad, because it's a lovely scene and

he thinks that their performances were constrained. Ideally, we'll have to reshoot.

This show is so well run that sometimes I forget that days like this are normal, if not

inevitable. This is a walk in the park compared to

most other shoots. On Queer as Folk,
we had one day so bad that the police were called in.
We were filming outside Stuart's
flat, in a dead rough area, and the local pub turned its
music up deliberately. When they
discovered the show's name, they turned it up further
still. It was blasting out. When we
went in to ask them to turn it down, the crew was
threatened with machetes!

Also last night, James called from the Nobles'
kitchen, pointing out that Sylvia says
that Donna is unemployed, though Donna is clearly in
work clothes. Damn! Over
the phone, I added a line: Sylvia saying, 'It's no good
dressing up like you're job-
hunting. You've got to do something.' I should have
seen that one. It's terrible for

THE DOCTOR'S SON

!!?



Dear Stefan Mofet, please
can u make this storey
please thank u xx

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

FROM:

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2007
18:03:49 GMT

Jacqueline King. No actor likes having a line added on the spot. (But I'm delighted **RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE** that Jacqueline is back as Sylvia. You just smile when you see her on the rushes. She's As for the actual producer, no one is sure yet. I don't think Susie would want it. I think so clearly a descendant of Jackie Tyler, and that's really good.) And then tonight it was she likes to move on every so often. But I'm glad that you like Piers. On a personal Phil phoning from the set, asking if there should be extras in the street as Miss Foster level, he's a proper old-fashioned gentleman. I wouldn't feel that the show was getting addresses the masses of Adipose and levitates. I said, 'No! What would extras do? Stand an exec who'd say, 'Davies was rubbish! That era is gone! Sweep it away!' Mind you, there and boggle badly?' That's what Phil had thought, but he wanted to check. maybe that's what the newcomer should say. I just want to be gently enshrined. In gold

leaf.

Is that too much to ask? FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
SATURDAY 20 OCTOBER 2007 15:57:05 GMT Oh, but 4.11 is

due in on Monday! MONDAY!!! Think back to all those leisurely **RE: MORE WORK, LESS**

MAYBE months when I was musing over that episode. Well, now it's here. I've less than a week. I'm interviewed in The Guardian today. Yet another interview in which I'm portrayed Although, a little bit of me is quite excited...as giggling, primping and lipsticked. In this one, I keep squeezing the journalist's arm

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, TUESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2007
22:28:53 GMT and practically burst into tears at one point. What a load of bollocks. As if. I've read

so many of those camped-up interviews now. I'm almost beginning to suspect it's true. **RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE** That's sobering. I was asked to do

The South Bank Show once, but I turned it down, How much has 4.11 changed now that it's Donna not Penny? because it was being directed by the man who did Paul Abbott's. That portrait of

FROM:

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 24 OCTOBER
2007 20:12:24 GMT Paul was so accurate, it was terrifying. It captured all his

mania and compulsion and

repetition. I thought, if I saw myself through that director's eyes, I'd never be able to **RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE** deny that it's true. Never see yourself. Well, we haven't seen the pivotal 'turn' scene in 4.1 as I'd planned, because it doesn't

fit Donna's new motive, but it's quite fun working out exactly when her life did turn FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2007 00:45:50 GMT left or right. I reckon - this has been Maybe-ing away for months now -- that her vital

RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE moment was when she went for the job interview at HC Clements. (HC Clements is

In TV land, things are moving fast. Steven's agent came in today to talk to Jane and back! Who'd have thought?) But then the story locks down in pretty much the same

way, so it's no worry. Well, it's a little continuity-fraught. More than I'd have liked.

Julie about Doctor Who, and then Jane and Julie interviewed Julie's replacement. In a

Now I've got to back reference as far as 3- -- in fact, to events before 3- that we never year or so, Julie will step down. She'll exec next year's Specials, but there will be a new

saw -- but I can handle that. exec for Series Five. Julie wants to either move to the US and work there or... well, all

sorts of top-secret plans are being discussed. But the interview turned out to be quite

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2007 20:18:38 GMT

emotional for her. It suddenly struck her that she's leaving. Her replacement -- if he

RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

accepts -- is going to be Piers Wenger. He only got into TV because he saw Queer as

The

rushes are in for the 4.1 wine bar scene. It's exactly what I wanted -- bizarre, panicky,

Folk, so naturally I like him. Very exciting. Very good news for the show. I hope he

funny
and weird. Nice stuff. But as for the ladies' toilets rushes -- well, I'm a bit peeved.¹
accepts. But no Julie! Imagine!

At
the Tone Meeting, I stressed how vital it is that Penny and Donna should not be in
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, TUESDAY 23
OCTOBER 2007 13:48:55 GMT

neighbouring
cubicles, or they'd both be aware of one another. And what have they gone

and
done? They're right next to one another! I might as well talk to thin air. That's a

RE: MORE WORK, LESS MAYBE

really
subtle, important point, lost. I texted James. He texted back, saying, 'I completely

I've met Piers before. He's lovely, wonderful and clever, although quite unlike Steven,

forgot!
Yes. Yes, you did. I think we'll be able to cut around it slightly, but still that's a

I think, who's just as lovely, wonderful and clever, but in a different sort of way.
Piers

scene
operating at 90 per cent instead of the full 100. That's a shame.

is softer and calmer. That contrast is exactly what the show would need, isn't it?
What

That's
not quite a wrap on 4.1, because we have to reshoot Howard's stuff on the
a team! (This is all horribly luwvie. I'm making myself retch. Shall I lie and say
that

hillside.
From what I hear, Bernard Cribbins is definitely in.

they're both complete bastards and Doctor Who is doomed?) Who will complete
the

Holy Trinity? Who's going to be the new Phil Collinson? What about Susie
Liggat?
¹ Unbeknownst to each other, Penny and Donna are
both hiding in the toilets at Adipose Industries, waiting for home time, in

to do some snooping.

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NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHSDOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

PARALLEL WORLDS

and have to be defeated. This time the Torchwood team is reported as havin

their lives. Meanwhile, Donna is working in a field, planting crops. Life is crap and This e-mail exchange between Steven Moffat and Russell explores the world is going to hell in a handcart. Diseases are breaking out. Rioting. Looting. similarities between their respective scripts for 4.10 and 4.11... But what can one ordinary ex-temp-now-wheat-sower called Donna do to change th FROM: STEVEN MOFFAT TO: RUSSELL DAVIES. THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2007 09:22:35 GMT

Except, she keeps bumping into this mysterious woman called Rose...

Rose is working with UNIT, who have salvaged the TARDIS. They can use STUFF

to send Donna back in time to stop herself turning right instead of left. Except Donna Right, so I'm on Episode 10 now. It's coming just before Episode 11 (no flies on

and everyone dies. No, I made up that last line! (Well, I'm making all of it up. Weme!), which is the one where Donna is in a parallel existence, yeah? Living the life she

are.) Still, 4.11 is pretty joyless - Christ, it's grim -- so for God's sake, Steven, put would've led? Now, we've already had this conversation, but just to be extra careful...

jokes in 4.10. But it doesn't sound too like Girl's World, does it? I suppose we both One element of my Episode 10 is Donna finding herself in Girl's World, wondering

Donna in an unreal world, but I can compensate for that by making it sound like what the hell happened, but starting to fit in, maybe falling in love (time moves

pattern. Does that help? Maybe I can combine both our plots by making it sound likedifferently there), with the Doctor trying to pull her back out -- I'm trying to avoid

forces are conspiring to separate her from the Doctor -- first of all, Girl's World, nowspoilers here -- as he runs about the Library, battling shadows and certain death. 1

Time Beetle, because Great Events are coming. Sort of saying, mystically, that theHow close are we, given the proximity? There are different ways I can play this, lots of

is trying to bind Donna to the Doctor, like they're meant to be together, becausedifferent ways, so what do I have to avoid? For instance, the Girl's World is currently

has some Greater Purpose To Fulfil. I haven't quite worked out what that is yet, butmodern-day Britain, but that could change without huge upheaval. What do you I'll sort it out in 4.13. Er, somehow.think?

STEVEN MOFFAT TO RUSSEI ! DAVIES, THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2007 17:25:35 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL OAVIES TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2007 16:43:50 GMT

STUFF

RE: STUFF

these mighty powerful influence-anything-they-want-to forces are of a broadly

I suppose it is a bit of a worry, except mine's supposed to be delivered on Monday, so I get

nature? One of my plans is to make it heartbreakingly hard for Donna to

in first, ha ha. (Note the 'supposed'.) Episode 11 is a big What If story. Namely, what if

her other life. Maybe the Doctor could muse, in the final scenes, that the efforts

Donna never met the Doctor? A nasty Time Beetle on her back causes this to happen. It's

to keep Donna in Girl's World seemed over the top, almost like something else called Turn Left, because she turned left in the car one day to go for her job interview at

at work...

HC Clements.2 If she'd turned right and gone for some other job, she'd never have met the

Doctor. But time changes (thanks, Time Beetle!), she does turn right... and the Racnoss

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2007 18:10:25 GMT

Webstar attacks, it's blown up, and the Doctor is pulled out of the wreckage, dead, because

STUFF

Donna wasn't there to tell him to stop. That's all seen from newsreaders' points of view

haven't worked out if it's heartbreaking for Donna to leave my parallel world. In

-- and by Donna, standing behind the crash barriers, just an ignorant bystander.

she should have a husband and kids so that changing reality means she has

So then the world gets worse and worse, as alien events happen with no one to stop

lose them, as the ultimate sacrifice... hmm, but we're both heading in the same

them. The hospital from Smith and Jones disappears and is taken to the moon; it's

there, aren't we? Shall I leave that alone? Do you want that?

delivered back, with everyone dead, along with -- it says on the news -- one Sarah Jane

Smith, who gave her life to stop the Judoon. Sob! A little while later, with the Noble

STEVEN MOFFAT TO: RUSSELL OAVIES, THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER 2007 18:53:20 GMT

family conveniently out of London for Christmas, a replica of the Titanic lands on

STUFF

Buckingham Palace (this happens off-stage - I've got the cheap episode!), southern

where I was going. Oops! Okay, you're going first anyway, and Fro on Tintin for the next

England is destroyed, irradiated, and the Nobles have to live like refugees in the north,

so you could see if it works for you. Very broadly, in mine, Donna would have kids, but

20 to a house. Worldwide recession. Some time later, the Sontarans invade, as in

realise that they're not real. Just as she's about to leave Girls World, one of her children is

to her, because he's got a suspicion that he stops existing every time that his mummy

1 The 'modern-day boy' mentioned In the Series Four Breakdown as featuring in Moffat's Space Library episodes is now a

little girl- She is custodian of an artificial world, referred to here as 'Girl's World', in which Donna finds herself trapped. isn't looking -- oh, the heartbreak!

2 Donna was working at Clements as a temp in 3.X.

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NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

hooting.

I love Lesley.

FROM: RUSSELL OAVIES TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, THURSDAY 25
OCTOBER 2007 19:13:43 GMT

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2007
19:27:46 GMT

RE: STUFF

RE:

STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

Ooh, no, that's brilliant. You have the kids. (You've got kids! You do better
kids!) I've been

So

you don't know what's coming in 4.10 until you read Steven's first draft? Doesn't he
struggling with my other-world husband and kids, because the world is going to
hell, so their

tell

you? Do you really fight the spoilers?

life isn't up to much, and I've got London destroyed, Donna picking hops (do
you pick hops?),

Rose and a gutted TARDIS... yeah, I've got enough to be going on with.

FROM:

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2007
19:44:02 GMT

Instead of making it How Can I Leave All This For A Different World In Which
You

RE:

STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

Don't Exist?, I've got How Can One Ordinary Woman Change The Whole World?'
Kids are It's funny, isn't it? I ask him not to spoiler me. He's written 4.9
already, so I've read

yours!

that.

It's called Silence in the Library, and it has a character in it who I'm just sure is

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permission

the

Doctor's wife (!!!), but I don't like to ask. I want to find out in the second episode, like
a viewer. It's the closest that I get to experiencing brand new Doctor Who. Not for long,
though...

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER
2007 20:44:09 GMT

STEVEN MOFFAT'S
THIGHS FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES. SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2007
19:56:11 GMT

... are now mighty and impressive, because -- mark the day -- pending money
and all RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

that, the deal is done. As of today, Series Five is
Steven's! In the Huw Wheldon Lecture that Nicola
Shindler gave in 2002 (what can I say? I'm

a
swot!), she says:

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, FRIDAY 26 OCTOBER
2007 21:04:32 GMT *There are a lot of ways to tell a
story and, in my opinion, a lot of ways that shouldn't*

RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S
THIGHS *be used.*
I've got my pet hates, which drive the writers I work with mad. But they have

Awesome news! I'm as delighted as you are... but are we really going to keep
this *to do a lot to persuade me to change my mind. I can't bear
voiceovers and flashbacks.*

subject line? I think I preferred 'Charlie Hunnam's
Arse'. *Interestingly, when you just lift them
out of a script, it's amazing how well the story*

without them, with no rewrites. I think they're often just a crutch for the writer work

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 27
OCTOBER 2007 17:58:48 GMT *and sometimes show lazy
storytelling. I feel the same about voiceover. It's lazy. This*

a visual medium, so don't have someone tell me what to think or what to watch; is
RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

show

me!

I started 4.11 today. Well, it made sense, what with prep starting on Monday!
I'm

Bearing

in mind, Russell, that you've just started writing an episode that hinges on
going to overrun on this script now and miss the National Television Awards in
the

flashback

I wonder whether you agree with Nicola. You also used flashbacks and

Albert Hall on Wednesday. I love that ceremony. I actually get to talk to
Hollyoaks

flashforw

aplenty in Casanova, and even The Runaway Bride employed flashbacks
boys. This is a big event in my life. Damn.

to

fill in Donna's backstory (and let's not get started on Love & Monsters), while there

Still, 4.11 is... interesting. A lot harder to rip through quickly, because it
needs so

were

voiceovers in Bob & Rose (I'm thinking of the scene where Bob is in a nightclub,

much construction. The opening scenes in the Fortune Teller's den on the
planet Shan

surveying

the talent), for example, so where do you stand on this? What are the dos

Shen (where the Time Beetle jumps on Donna's back, and we flashback to
Donna's

and

don'ts of flashbacks and voiceovers? Plus, from a technical point of view, how do

life on Earth before she met the Doctor) are so complicated, with so much to
be

you

write them into a script?

established, that they could have gone on for 20 pages. Even now, I don't get
to the

pre-titles cliffhanger until Page 7. I don't think it's ever been that late. After
the titles,

FROM:

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2007

21:22:33 GMT

we're straight into the parallel world where Donna turned right instead of left, but I'm

RE:

STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

having a lot of trouble, because Steven has a sort of parallel-world Donna in 4.10, too.

I'm

with Nicola - I think you should beware. The techniques are too often being used

I'm having to write around his plans. But I can't wait to see what he's come up with.

to

disguise the truth, the real story, the heart of the script. It's all pyrotechnics and

In other news, we offered the part of Sky Silvestry in 4.8 to Lesley Sharp -- and

she's said yes! Brilliant! She needed some talking into it, because of the sheer amount

of line-learning. I phoned her up and said we'd cast Jane Horrocks instead. She was

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
---------------	-------------	------------	-----------------

TALE
NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

glitter, fuelled by insecurity. That 'Where do you start a story?' question can become just cut to his house, he's all on his own, he gets out a gun. Boring! The voiceover givesso overwhelming that the writer goes mad, firing out shots all over the place. Til it a size and majesty; it leads you into the revelation and then quickly gets out, leavingstart here! And now! And backwards!' Oh, why not just get on with it and write the you dangling. In a show that's seen as camp, pretty and funny, it's easy to miss howstory? Nic's dissatisfaction comes, I think, from having read so many scripts where the incredibly skilful that is.techniques are masking the skill. If I'm reading something new, especially by someone That authorial/narrator's voice demands a certain wisdom in summing up events,new, I want to know that they can write, I want to know how their characters talk, because often it says stuff along the lines of "That's the thing about love..." That's hardhow the pace skips along, how the story hooks me, how passionate the writer is, how to write. You can end up with the Hallmark Cards voiceover. 'That's the thing aboutmuch I feel the whole thing. I'm not interested in admiring the artifice and thinking, love: it hurts and wounds, and yet, when it's pure, you'll never feel so safe.' Yuck! Theoh, that's clever. voiceover is a honey trap for bad writing. It has to exist for more reasons than 'here's a

Of course, those devices can work. I remember being very careful with the use of Old sweet way to end the episode'. That's why Nic is warning against it.Casanova as narrator in Casanova. The presence of an old and very much alive man was As with all this stuff, you're never sure if you've got it right, even after transmission.in danger of robbing Young Casanova's experiences of any vitality or danger. I'll admit, I The first draft of Mine All Mine started at the end - or almost at the end - of the story,wrestled with that, but I was experienced enough to be aware of the dangers and with the Vivaldi family on stage in the middle of a public concert in Swansea, thesubvert them. The sequence that I'm most proud of is Young Casanova's duel, where Vote Vivaldi climax from Episode 5. You were thinking, who are they? Why's everyoneobviously he's going to survive (Old Casanova says afterwards, 'Well, you didn't think cheering? They what?! They own the town?! 'Tell us how this all started,' the MC saidI was going to die, did you?'), but it worked because it forced me to look at the duel to Max Vivaldi -- and then, on Max, we flashbacked to the beginning of the story.from a different angle - a more important angle - namely, why is it taking place? What Now, Nicola cut that, because she thought, never mind framing devices, don't distractis the Duke of Grimani (who Casanova is duelling) actually thinking? Which leads to me, just tell the story properly. In other words: get on with it! And I agreed with her.devastating insights into Grimani's life. The duel is actually irrelevant. I lost that opening. But still, sometimes, in the dark hours, I wonder... if that had

Even with Peter O'Toole in the role, Old Casanova's appearances are limited, opened the episode, you'd have seen what's at stake for that ordinary

family, right from

especially as the story goes on. There are huge chunks where he doesn't appear. Even the start. You'd have taken hold of an essentially ephemeral and even silly notion -- I

then, the role of narrator is potentially flat and dull, so it was vital -- oh, crucial -- that own Swansea!' - and made it concrete, powerful and alive. Without that, the starting

Old Casanova had a plot of his own. He had his relationship with fellow servant Edith point of the story was: man gets off train and gets into taxi. Hardly thrilling. The

and, more vitally, his hope that his one true love, Henriette, was still alive. Without flashforward opening would have given you scale, crowds, cheering and fireworks.

that, if he'd just been a dying old man, it would have been passive and uninteresting. Hmm. Difficult to say. I'll always wonder.

Peter knew that. When he was first offered the part, he wasn't so interested, because From a technical point of view, writing them into a TV script, usually a flashback

he knew how dull a narrator is -- and that Young Casanova could upstage the whole demands a scene break, because it's a different place or a different time. I'd write:

thing! It was only when Peter read it, when he saw that Old Casanova had a story, that

1.

INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

he accepted.

Even with voiceovers, take care. The greatest TV example these days is Desperate BEN is back from Rome. He unpacks his stuff, then leans

Housewives, but you have to consider the bigger framework at play. Firstly, Desperate against the fridge, remembering...

Housewives isn't one particular character's story: it's Life On Wisteria Lane.

That

CUT

TO:

overarching structure, that authorial stance, allows the voiceover. It's part of the whole

2.

INT. ROME, RESTAURANT - NIGHT

show. It's part of the show's ethos. I could listen to that actress, Brenda Strong, for

ever. That voice is seriously, beautifully cast. But more's the point, that character, Mary A RAT runs across the restaurant! PHIL screams!

TO:

Alice, is dead. Added thrill! In a show about secrets, the omnipresent narrator allows us to see into people's hidden lives. It's at its best at the end of an episode, when Mary

3.

INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Alice's voiceover calmly leads us to an otherwise silent image -- the New Handsome

BEN

laughs at the memory.

Neighbour has a gun in his kitchen! -- so it's actually a clever, witty way of framing a cliffhanger. Imagine how dull that Handsome New Neighbour scene would be if you

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

That doesn't use the word flashback at all. Although, in fairness, we've been talking FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2007 21:46:56 GMT

about flashbacks, so you're expecting one. If this were a brand new script, I might read RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS that and think, eh? What just happened? What rat? It might be better to write: Like Nicola Shindler, in her Huw Wheldon Memorial Lecture, you must have pet

hates
that drive the writers you work with mad. The other month, you cited the list of
2. FLASHBACK - INT. ROME, RESTAURANT -
NIGHT three adjectives (and I was curious, fascinated and amused), but any others...?

FROM:
RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 2007 22:28:30 GMT Or even:

RE:
STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS
2. INT. ROME, RESTAURANT -
NIGHT I'm hesitant to list any particular
devices like Nicola does, because, as she'd admit

FLASHBACK. Two nights ago. A RAT runs across the
restaurant! herself, all her dislikes can work. (She produced
Casanova, remember.) A writer should

PHIL
screams! never cut him-
or herself off from something that might be useful one day. I'd be mad

to say,
Til never do flashbacks!' Then again...The most important thing is that it's nice and clear, and
doesn't piss off the reader. Dream sequences. I hate dream sequences. I hate them in
novels, too. If I come to a Don't
say: dream
sequence, I turn the pages until it's over. Nothing ever happens in a dream. It's

all
symbolic. Pathetically symbolic. Why get symbolic when you can show me what's
1. INT. BEN'S KITCHEN -
DAY really happening? Also, have
you ever read or seen a dream sequence that actually feels

BEN is back from Rome. He unpacks his stuff, then leans against

like a

dream? Really? I think it's impossible. Dreams are so odd and dislocated. I've

the fridge and his mind goes back, back, back, to two
nights never seen one captured properly. Matt Jones fell foul of this
on The Impossible Planet.

ago, when he was so happy. On a CU of his noble and yet
careworn The cliffhanger ended with Rose being possessed by the Devil -
her eyes went black
features...

and she

said, 'I am the Beast Incarnate!' or something. It was wonderful - but then

MIX TO: white frames, which pulsate and bleach, filling
the the next episode opened on the Tylers' estate. Back home with
Jackie and Mickey, but

frame, then slowly bleed into fleeting defocused images, as we a
strangely different Jackie and Mickey, doing mysterious things, speaking with the
gently flashback to the sounds of Roma herself, the pasta, the
people, and the rat, yes, the rat...

wrong

voices, being generally spooky, because, well, it was a dream. Inside Rose's head.

I simply

couldn't bear it. I was convinced - I'm still convinced - that nothing of any

Blah, blah, blah, get on with
it! dramatic merit can happen in a dream
sequence. So out it went.

And voiceovers are
simple: Mind you, isn't Steven
planning a dream sequence for 4.10, with Donna trapped in a

fake

reality? But he'll write it so well, it'll prove me wrong. I think the point there is that

I. INT. BEN'S KITCHEN - DAY

the

Doctor is trying to get Donna out, so that injects drama into the whole set-up.

Ben is back from Rome. He unpacks his stuff, then
leans Another pet hate - and you'll see this three times a night
on British TV - is scenes

against the fridge, remembering... that
end with one character storming off, and the other character just saying their

name,

plaintively or crossly. Angie storms out, and Tom just says, 'Angie!' Whenever

BEN V.O.

that
happens on TV, I sit there and say, 'Have you lost the use of your legs?' (I'm always
I remember that wonderful night in the restaurant in
Rome... talking
at the TV. I love it.) Watch a week's output and count how many times a scene
ends
with the departing persons name being called out. It's not good enough! I could
More often, I write 'V/O' instead of 'V.O.', just because I always have. Some
people argue that people storm out of rooms very rarely. How often in your life have you
actually
would write 'O.S.', which stands for 'Out of Sight'. However, in my multi-
camera stormed out? It happens 27 times a night on the TV. There has to be a better
way. (The
directing days, 'O.S.' meant 'Over Shoulder', so it makes me flinch. And don't
write other night, on Casualty, a character storming out did at least have the good grace
to say,
'BEN OOV, because that's 'Out Of Vision', which literally means offstage
but 'Don't follow me!' That's some sort of solution, I suppose.) I don't think the
writer even
nonetheless present -- i.e. there would be a second Ben calling through from
the notices. They think it's acceptable. They've seen it happen 5,000 times, so they
think it's
kitchen. (Maybe there is...? I know nothing about
Chiswick.) natural. They're not really writing at all; they're just
transcribing a weakened version of

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

their overall television
experience. Centre in Swansea this
afternoon. I've been so busy that I hadn't paid it much attention.

I can't even bear phone conversations that don't end in 'Bye'. Everyone says
goodbye (All I've wanted to think about is Donna and Rose.) I opened the
brochure last night, at the end of a phone call. Only a Wall Street banker or Joan
Collins could conceivably about 3am, just to check details - oh Christ, it's a
full-blown posh lunch with Dylan just hang up. The laziness comes from having
seen this on screen so many times that Thomas' daughter and the Mayor
and 200 guests all paying £25 to see me! And I hadn't the writer thinks it's
acceptable. Bad habits. This is my other favourite: prepared a
thing! I had close to a panic attack this morning, running around, frantic,

in
a flop sweat. My head was exploding. My dad in the audience and everything!

Angle goes to leave the
room. Needless to say, it went
marvellously. I'm a bastard with a microphone. I'm genuinely,

ANGIE properly
arrogant with a microphone. I can understand Hitler with a microphone.

Well then, I'll see you
later. I haven't had time to write
more script, but I'm going to give it a go now, see how far

I
get. Hey, I don't know London geography. If Donna is in Chiswick and the Racnoss

At the door, she stops, looks back.

Webstar
is heading for central London, what direction is that? At the moment, Donna

ANGIE

(CONT'D) says west, because they always say
they're going 'up west' on EastEnders. But that's not

Oh, and
Tom? correct from
Chiswick, is it?

Pause. Tom looks at her.

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, MONDAY 29 OCTOBER 2007

01:38:03 GMT

ANGIE (CONT'D)

RE:

STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

Thanks.

No,

it's flying east. Chiswick is in West London. They say 'up west' on EastEnders

And

she

walks

out.

because...

well,

that's in East London. And on that bombshell...

NO ONE HAS EVER DONE THAT! Pure TV artifice. It drives me bonkers.

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2007 02:05:44 GMT

I can't bear dialogue that's forced into unnatural shapes because of production

RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

circumstances. For example, it's almost impossible to include 'Let's go to the cinema

Is 4.11

too adult? I've already taken out lines about the mass graves in the south of dialogue anywhere in TV drama, in any form, because it's hard to know what's

going to England. But I do like that creating-a-whole-different-world thing.

It's hard to do, but be on at the cinema when you transmit. I remember one, just

once, many years ago on an enjoyable sort of hard. One minute, Donna

and her family are normal people. *The EastEnders - Ricky Butcher said that he*

wanted to go and see The Adventures of Baron

next, they're impoverished and homeless, all in a few short scenes. I sort of believe

it, *Munchausen, which was actually showing in cinemas at the time! That*

sentence was so

that it could happen to any of us, all of us, in the blink

of an eye. One day, I want to odd, but brilliant, by being so rare. I've never

forgotten it. Otherwise, you should find write a huge-scale adult series with

that happening. It's good for Donna, too. I love ways to write around it, not have

dialogue that goes: 'D'you fancy seeing that new film writing her. There's an

indestructible core to her, like she's always determinedly at tonight?' 'Yeah, great,

I'll come with you.' That's never been said in real life, ever. (What right-angle to

events. I'd love to be like Donna. film? Which cinema?) It gets worse: Til meet you

at eight.' 'Okay, see you then.' (Meet

you where? Your house? My house? Outside the cinema? Where at eight?

Where?} It FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,

TUESDAY 30 OCTOBER 2007 18:44:40 GMT

really is the curse of the soap opera. They find it acceptable to say, 'Fancy trying

that new RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS restaurant in town?' 'Yeah, let's go

tonight!' (What restaurant? Where in town? Is that it?) I'd been hoping that I'd

finish 4.11 by tomorrow afternoon, so I could hotfoot it to STOP IT! Writing like

that is pure laziness. the Albert Hall for
the National Television Awards, but that's bugged. I'm getting

I, of course, make no mistakes
ever. nowhere today. I'm always
planning dramatic arrivals that never actually happen.

Er... Maybe
everyone does.

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 28 OCTOBER
2007 23:45:35 GMT FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL
DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2007 20:28:46 GMT

RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S
THIGHS RE: STEVEN
MOFFAT'S THIGHS

I've had a terrible day. I'd half-forgotten that I had to give a talk at the Dylan
Thomas I'm e-mailing you in the dark. If I switch off the lights, the trick-or-
treaters won't know

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE

NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

that I'm in. The National Television Awards start in half an hour. Are you there?
(If you disappointed? What do you do? Is it too late by then?

are, pointless question.)

FROM:

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2007
16:11:04 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 31
OCTOBER 2007 22:19:19 GMT

RE:

STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

I
live in a state of constant disappointment, but that's what makes you work harder,
to act**RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS**

on
that disappointment and eliminate it. The Edit tends to get skipped in all
discussionsHappy Halloween! I'm stuck at home working, but I might as well have
gone - I'm

of
modern Doctor Who, like all we do is delete a few lines. But the Edit is tough,
vigorousgetting 50 texts a minute from the Albert Hall. Hey, Doctor Who won Most
Popular

and
merciless, because that's when you really shape all those words and pictures into
theDrama! And David is Most Popular Actor! He dedicated his award to his mum. I
did

drama.
It's like starting again. It's like production begins from scratch. No one ever
takesthat when I won Comedy Writer of the Year, but then had 107 people coming
up to

the
script into the Edit, because it's irrelevant by then. You're dealing .with what
you'veme afterwards, saying, 'Your mother must be delighted.' I spent the evening
saying,

got,
not what you should have got. That's why we go through five, six, seven edits,
with'No, she's dead.' That put the dampeners on it.

millions
of notes from all of us, every time.

I'm making this sound very executive-driven, like Julie, Phil and I do all the work. Of
FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 31
OCTOBER 2007 23:46:09 GMT

course,
the director and the editor do a hell of a lot before we even step in there. Having
RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

said
that, Doctor Who has limited post-production time, so often we get to see the show

Sad news. Howard Attfield died this morning. We've just heard. Coincidentally, we're

at
a stage when, really, the director and editor should spend another fortnight in there

watching the first edit of 4.1 tomorrow, which has the Geoff stuff edited into it, just

alone.
But that's disingenuous, because we love going in there while it's still a bit raw.

so that we can get the feel of that sequence in the overall shape of the episode.
That's We know how to hammer something into shape. I'm always reading about interfering

going to be weird. Poor old Howard. It feels double-weird reading back the stuff
in 4.11 executives sitting in Edits, demanding that you shave a few frames off a shot, as a Great

where Sylvia and Donna mention
Geoff. Evil Of Modern TV... but
that's exactly what we do, and I think its right. I suppose if

Writing 4.11 is hard enough at the moment. Rose has to explain the whole situation
your executive is a bonehead, you're in trouble. But then the US system is to lose the

to Donna. The problem is, the audience sort of knows what's going on, but you can't
director from the Edit, so the producers take over completely.

skip Donna's reactions, and there's so much to react to, so I have to keep it interesting,
A lot of what we do is eliminating the disappointment. Any moment that's only 90

somehow new and slightly unexpected, while working out where to place what
per cent, we work at - try this, try that, cut it faster, lose that line, add music, play it off

information and when. I'd hoped to finish tonight. Ah, sod it. That's enough for

now. David, emphasise Catherine during that bit of dialogue - to make it 100 per cent. Any

I've smoked too much. moment that's only fifty per cent, we'll move heaven and earth to cut. You sharpen and

concentrate it, until you like it. The more you watch something, the more you like it, the

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2007 11:55:03 GMT more you forgive it, the more inclined you are to accept its faults, and that's why you have

RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS to remember the impact of that very first viewing, always. The most awful viewing was

I'm hotfooting it from the 4.1 Edit. First reaction: I am delighted. Mad, funny, weird, the first Edit for The Runaway Bride, because the director, Euros Lyn, and his editor hadn't

mental, it's oddly unpredictable, sort of unclassifiable. The genre keeps switching like had time - in a tricky episode, with that motorway chase and everything - to put on any

crazy. There's a long way to go - I've three solid pages of notes, and Phil and Julie have music. (We always watch with temporary guide tracks, like movie scores and things.) It

tons more -- but I know we'll get it to where we want it. Actually, I think the loveliest was the flattest hour of Doctor Who ever, particularly when it's supposed to be a big, blousy

moment is when the taxi driver pulls up and says, 'Stacy Campbell?' It's a small part Christmas episode. The music is so vital to this version show. God, that was dispiriting! I

for an actor, but he says it perfectly. And Donna looks so lost. The night and the street was gutted. It was like watching an episode where David has a bag over his head.

and the sudden calm are just perfect. It feels real, in that moment. A little, insignificant I'm just describing a writer's life, really -- and a producer's, a director's, an editor's.

moment just crystallises into everything that I wanted. Everything is a work in progress. Potential is never reached. Do you remember how

worried I was, on Voyage of the Damned, that the passengers and crew of the Titanic

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, THURSDAY 1

NOVEMBER 2007 14:23:44 GMT

would appear to be human? That it looks like they're from Earth instead of just visiting?

RE:

STEVEN

MOFFAT'S

THIGHS

We played about with giving them bindis and stuff, although we abandoned that idea.

Have you ever been disappointed at an Edit? Like, really disappointed? Crushingly

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

Well, just last night, it occurred to me that I should have simply had the people on But I hit the roof the other day, because Episode 8 of Sarah Jane hasn't shaped up so the Titanic referring to 'the humans' a lot more. Like, a couple of dozen times, in the nicely: it went out on the CBBC Channel with bloody atrocious credits. 'CASTINGdialogue. It's so obvious! I can't believe it didn't occur to me earlier. Too late now, of BY ANDY PRYGOR', that sort of thing! How amateur. I banged off an e-mail accusingcourse. Instead, we fuffed about with sodding bindis. In 20 years' time, that'll still Julie, Phil, Matthew Bouch and me of not looking after that show in post-production

enough.
We were all there for filming and the Edits, but then other work has overtakenniggle me. It'll always be a work in progress.

us
and we've neglected it. That was all a bit sour.FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2007 03:12:03
GMT
Also, I saw David and Catherine tonight, to explain the end of 4.13 to them. That

went
down a treat. Bloody lovely. They were enraptured. David kept on saying, 'That'sRE: STEVEN
MOFFAT'S THIGHS

exactly
*where it should end!' But I'm not going to tell you what that means.*Finito 4.11!
I'm not sure it makes sense. Sod it, I'm posting it to the office now. They
need prep. Ooh, I can sleep tomorrow.

FROM:
RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER
2007 00:14:58 GMT

The best news is - I looked at my watch, thinking of telling you this, and it was 9.15

SILENCE
IN THE DISCOtonight - I finally worked out how to write out Donna at the end of the series!
This has

I've
been on the phone to Julie since 9.30pm. Sometimes the BBC is the maddest,been driving me
mad. Quietly, desperately insane. There isn't time to tell you all the stuff

stupidest
place in the whole world. An example: it was proposed that the Christmasgoing on in my
head, but sometimes I leave out the most awful fears, because I don't even

Special
press launch - it's on 18 December -- has a disco. Well, okay, fine. The place islike admitting
them to myself. It's been churning in my head - how, how, how? All day

booked

until midnight. But the council says that the music has to stop by 11pm, so whatlong, every day -- how? She loves the Doctor, she loves travelling with him, she chose to be

happens

between 11pm and midnight? Mrs Event Organiser says, 'I thought we couldwith him and went to extraordinary lengths to find him again, and she has precious little

have

a silent disco. It worked well when I was at MTV.' A silent disco - though you're 25to go back to, so how could she leave? She gets injured? Dies? Sylvia dies? Donna gets

and

probably know this - is when everyone puts on their iPods and dances in silence. Atlost in time, and I pick her up for one of the Specials (we find her years later, on an alien

a

Doctor Who press launch! To quote Julie, 'We're not launching bloody Skins!world, citizen of the universe, older and wiser, no longer needing the Doctor)? None of

those ideas worked. They're all crap. They're all dull, actually. But then, tonight, I solved

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2007 00:32:25 GMTit. At 9.15pm. It's like it just went wham! Right now, I can't wait to write it. Huge stuff.

RE:

SILENCE IN THE DISCO

And I'm not going to tell you what it is! HA HA HA! It needs to sink into my head

Silent

discos are fun. There was one at Glastonbury this year. Then again, there were

for a bit. But I don't think you should know. I think you should find out.

Portaloos,

pear cider, Lily Allen, and people swimming in their own excrement at

Glastonbury,

but none of that would go down very well at a Doctor Who press launch.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, FRIDAY 2 NOVEMBER 2007 08:21:29 GMT

You

were right to scoff.

RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

NOOOOOOOOOO!!!

FROM

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2007 21:10:20 GMT

Fine. I'll wait. Hmpf.

RE:

SILENCE IN THE DISCO

This

morning, we found out that lovely Sam Kelly, who was to be Professor Hobbes

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 8
NOVEMBER 2007 23:47:14 GMT

in
4.8, has been involved in a car crash and broken his leg. So he's out. We'll have to
RE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S
THIGHS recast. Oh God...
Episode 8 is shaping up nicely. We've cast Sam Kelly as Professor Hobbes, Lindsey
I
got a car back to Cardiff from Manchester last night, and it occurred to me, out of
Coulson as Val Cane, Daniel Ryan as Biff Cane (he was Rose's first boyfriend, Andy,
the
blue, as we drove along... I should do a Davros origin story in 4.12/4.13! Like I
in Bob & Rose -- it's a Lesley/Daniel reunion!), and Rakie Ayola as the Hostess. That's
did
with the Master in The Sound of Drums. It sort of demands it, doesn't it? How did
an amazing cast. I'm so excited. Also, we've auditioned a very handsome Goth-type
Davros
become how he is? How did he get scarred? Well, he was Josef Mengele, wasn't
Jethro. Those eyes! His name is Colin Morgan. Oh, and did I tell you that we've cast
he?
The war, the wounded, the experiments. Blimey, that's good. (Interesting use of
Georgia Moffett as the Doctor's daughter in 4.6? Peter Davison's real-life daughter!
the
word 'good', but you know what I mean.) Trouble is, in costing these episodes, I
She really is the Doctor's daughter! We didn't cast her for the publicity, honest. She's
haven't
allowed for that at all - digital mattes of Skaro, hospitals full of wounded - but
genuinely fantastic. She's going to have one hell of a career.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS
it's worth pushing for, don't you think?
2 Text
message from: Russell

23-Nov-2007 00:07FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
THURSDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2007 13:23:02
GMT Yes! And she really did watch it.
When I met her last year, she said, 'All

RE: SILENCE IN THE
DISCO
Daleks flying into Canary Wharf! I wish we could have done that.'

I received an e-mail from Janet Fielding this morning. She used to run the
Women Oh, but you did, Verity. You
made it all.

in Film and Television organisation, and I'm due to go to the WFTV Awards on 7

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 24 NOVEMBER
2007 13:01:49 GMTDecember, to give a Lifetime Achievement award to Verity Lambert.
David is going,

too, if he can be released from the schedule. But the e-mail is devastating. Verity's
cancer RE: SILENCE IN THE DISCOhas returned. She's been taken into
palliative care. Janet, bless her, is apologising, because Yesterday's read-
through of 4.8 was a bit disconcerting. (Everyone else was happy,now they want the award to
be collected by a friend of Verity's. As if I'd mind! I don't like but sod them.)
It just sounded slight and unimportant and weak. Maybe whackingto intrude and ask how
bad it really is, but... great CUs of
fearful faces will sell it. Lesley synced so well with everyone - it was an

performance - so it sounded interesting rather than scary. It even started

Text message from:
Russell to sound natural. I do
worry that a thin conceit has become a whole episode. I know

Sent: 22-Nov-2007
23:22 that I've taken a big risk.
I'm a bit worried.

Verity Lambert died today. We've just heard. I'm
ridiculously sad. The read-through of 4.11, on the other hand,
was magnificent. Rarely have I been

pleased in a read-through. Catherine blazed her way through it. She did something

Text message from: Ben

never seen anyone do before: she said a line, made it hugely funny, everyone roared

Sent: 22-NOV-2007 23:32

laughter, then she looked up, looked around, and she laughed too! It was a look of

pure delight. Great moment. Catherine's capacity to perform anything really

I'm speechless. Tomorrow is Doctor Who's 44th anniversary. None of us

me up, to go anywhere, to say anything. There's a great bit in that script, when

would be doing what we're doing if it weren't for her.

is being sacked, and there's a whumph! as the Royal Hope Hospital is returned

Earth, offstage, but she's so full of her own problems, she turns to the office and

Text message from: Russell

'Well, isn't that wizard?!' There's something about that line that proves everything

Sent: 22-Nov-2007 23:36

been trying to say about dialogue, how free you can be, because I've never heard

I know. We're putting a dedication at the end of the Xmas Special.

say, 'Isn't that wizard?!' You'd never expect someone like Donna to say 'wizard'.

wouldn't seem to be in her vocabulary. I'm not even sure myself why she chooses it.

Text message from: Ben

it works. Somehow, for reasons I can't even articulate, 'wizard' is exactly right for

Sent: 22-NOV-2007 23:37

moment. Moments like that, I like my writing.

I was going to suggest it, but then realised that of course you'd be doing

that. Quite right.

message from: Russell

25-Nov-2007 18:19

Text message from: Russell

who we've cast as the Professor in 4.8? David Troughton!

Sent: 22-NOV-2007 23:57

Julie just said, 'Knowing our luck with graphics, it'll be spelt "Varsity

message from: Ben

Lamboot'T I've been laughing so much, like you do when you're sad.

25-Nov-2007 22:10

s marvellous thing: David Troughton appeared in the 50th Doctor

Text message from: Ben

serial, The War Games, back in 1969... and now you've cast him in the

Sent:

23-Nov-2007

00:02

50th

episode of the revived series. FANBOY OVERLOAD!

I'm just glad she lived to see Doctor Who become, once again, as brilliant

and imaginative and important and loved as it was when she produced it.

2 A digital matte painting (DMP), added during post-production, is used to create virtual sets and backdrops.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

Text message from:
Russell sheer joy of that resolution is
fantastic. It's so Doctor Who. It's so Doctor. It's so Donna.

Sent: 25-Nov-2007
22:19 Sod off, Davros, you've no chance!

It was meant to be! FANBOY GLEE! Hey, Biliie is in town
tonight. She starts

FROM:
RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 1 DECEMBER 2007
14:35:44 GMT

filming 4.11 tomorrow. Rose Tyler is back!

RE:
SILENCE IN THE DISCOFROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
THURSDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2007 23:45:19 GMT In the early hours
of this morning, Steven Moffat delivered 4.10! At last! It's brilliant, ofRE: SILENCE IN THE
DISCO course. Such an
imagination, it's staggering. I'm not sure I understand it yet, but then IEverything is firing on
all cylinders at the moment. We've two episodes filming at read it at about 3am.
We're trying to get Kate Winslet for River Song, who's sort of theonce, so it's only to be
expected. Catherine and Bernard are brilliant together in 4.11, Doctor's wife, and
Michael Gambon or Ian McKellen for Dr Moon.3 Fat chance!as are Catherine and Biliie.
Although, watching the 4.8 rushes is an odd experience, I've just returned from
Shan Shen, the fabled Chino planet. I have voyaged to the stars!because it's all being shot in
sequence. I'm seeing the story unfold, literally, day by In an alley behind Cardiff's Royal
Infirmary. It's an amazing set. Smoke, lanterns, chickens,day. The cast is starting to go stir-
crazy on that Crusader 50 set. They did the monster- peppers, alien fruit... and it's only
for two short scenes! It's starting to piss down now, butknocking-on-the-outside-of-the-bus
scene today. Both David and Lesley texted to say, that's probably made it more Blade
Runner-y. It's unsettling, though, going on set, becauseWe're scared to death!' More
importantly, Colin Morgan is beautiful. You meet him I feel such a stranger. Almost
a fraud. All I do is type the words 'Shan Shen', that's easy,in real life and think, yeah, nice,
sweet. But he's one of those lucky bastards that the and then all those people have to
slave away on a Saturday, in the rain, to create the bloodycamera absolutely loves. All
cheekbones and black hair and mmm! He's a seriously thing. I actually feel guilty.
Julie and I laugh about what the crew must think of us whenexcellent actor, too. Every line,
he makes a really interesting choice. we turn up on set, because
inevitably you're met with 'Nice of you to join us', like we've

I would describe to you the fear and bile that's rising up with the approach of
writing left our catamites and Leisure Palaces to walk amongst the workers. People talk as

though

the series finale, but I can't bear to. Oh, that cold clutch of fear. Steven wrote to me you've never been on a set before, almost saying, 'This is the camera. This is the director.

today, saying, 'Don't you feel like sticking your head out of the window and yelling, You'll have to be quiet because we're going for a take,' forgetting that we've spent 20 years

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING!!!" Yes, absolutely. Solidarity. Fear is always on different sets in every sort of circumstance. You see yourself becoming that oft-joked-

the same. Different worries with different scripts, but the same baseline fear. about, never-on-set producer. Like all that experience was for nothing. Hey ho.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, FRIDAY 30
NOVEMBER 2007 00:02:56 GMT Text
message from: RussellRE: SILENCE IN THE
DISCO Sent:
03-Dec-2007 22:14It can't all be fear and bile, can it? Aren't there bits of 4.12/4.13 that
you're really We've just played the Christmas episode to
Kylie, in London. She clapped and

looking forward to
writing? laughed
and cried and even sang a bit. What a weird night!

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 30
NOVEMBER 2007 00:24:48 GMT
Text
message from: Ben

Sent:
03-Dec-2007 22:19RE: SILENCE IN THE DISCO

It's not all fear and bile, no. Like, I've worked out the end to 4.13 - well, not the very Send her my love. Actually, she's probably forgotten who I am.

end, that's Donna, but the climax to the plot and all the Dalek stuff. I went into a
frenzy, playing Murray's Series Three soundtrack CD full-blast. I actually stood
up Text message from: Russelland walked around the
room. For ages, just striding. And hitting things. I was
sort Sent: 03-Dec-2007 22:21of banging work surfaces
and stuff. Sometimes that happens. After about 20
minutes Oh, she's disappeared off into the night
now. She's probably forgotten me

of frenzy, I was actually crying. In a good way. With relief. With happiness,

actually.

already. She is not of this mortal Earth.

Because it works. I really think it works and will be magnificent. Right now, I believe in it with all my heart. So that's good. That's not fear and bile.

Of course, it's only one of a thousand problems solved - I don't know how I get everyone to the right positions yet, that's the tricky thing, the geography - but the In the little girl's artificial world, Dr Moon is treating her.

3

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINE: STEVEN MOFFAT'S THIGHS

Text message from:
Ben if I was a dad and I'd left
my family in the room, and when I got back... they were

Sent: 03-Dec-2007
22:22 gone? Just gone. That's
the start of a Doctor Who story! The whole hotel is empty, at

Yes. She's
Stardust, Christmas, like
it's been taken out of time or something, and creatures are beginning

to
stir, and the only other person in existence is this man called the Doctor. That sort
FROM:
RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6 DECEMBER 2007
14:05:57 GMT of thing. Nice. But random. In need of an awful lot of
thought - and I have to write
CRUSADER
52? this in

February, so there's not enough time to develop it. I'm stuck with random, madTime for an
update. Phil wasn't part of the discussions about Donna's parallel worlds in thoughts,
desperately trying to plug a gap, but none of them quite working. It feels both 4.10 and 4.11.
Coming to it clean - this is why it's good to have someone coming lousy. Sometimes I
think, if I just died, all of this would go away. That begins to feel to it clean - he's thrown his
hands up in horror and said that we can't run both episodes like a good option. It
wouldn't be letting anyone down. I'd be blameless and free and consecutively. Yikes! He's
right, of course. He wondered whether we should ask Steven martyred. Ridiculous, I
know. to write out Donna's parallel life completely, but it's way too integral. And I've known

about it all along, so it's my fault. As a result, we're shifting the transmission
order. FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, THURSDAY 6
DECEMBER 2007 15:18:15 GMT

Steven's two-parter becomes Episodes 8 and 9, Midnight becomes Episode 10,
and RE: CRUSADER 52? then Episode 11 remains the same, so there's a one-
episode buffer in between Donna's It's lucky that you're an atheist, then. Bigger all
on the other side, and you know it. You'd two parallel
worlds. *hate that.*

Tragically, that means that Midnight is no longer our fiftieth episode. My
fanboy Besides, if you died, I'd never find out what's in store for Donna Noble.
Reasonheart is broken. It might as well be the Crusader 52 now. What a shame. (And
we've enough to keep going, Russell. lost your marvellous David Troughton/fiftieth
episode fact!) Hand on heart, though, I

think the new order is good. All the experimental stuff gets shifted further back in
the Text message from: Russellseries. I worry that running

Midnight and Turn Left consecutively means two lower-

Sent: 07-

Dec-200715:22budget episodes in a row - but actually that was the same as Love & Monsters and Fear

Are you on set today? I hope the Crusader 52 is fun.*Her, and the ratings went up, week on week, so I'm worrying for nothing. That doesn't*

stop me worrying,
though. Text message
from: Ben

Elsewhere, in Maybe land, it's a pit of despair! I even hesitated over that exclamation Sent: 07-Dec-200715:26

mark, because that's making it sound like fun. I know I had that moment of joy the i am on set, and it'll always be the Crusader 50 to me. I helped name this bus!

other day, but it hasn't lasted. There's a greater fear, of course, and that's Christmas What am I supposed to do with my David Troughton/50th episode fact now,

2008. That's doing my head in, above and beyond 4.12/4.13. I haven't a clue -- and eh? The horror.

it has to be written in February! I keep thinking of ways to escape. I could tell them that there just won't be a Christmas 2008 episode. "Tough!" What would happen? The Text message from: Ben

world wouldn't end. But Julie would die. I couldn't bear to let her down that much. Sent: 07-Dec-200716:16

I'm not sure about Cybermen in the snow, in Victorian times. Would it be a retreat Hold the presses! I've just realised, Midnight IS still the 50th episode of new

of The Unquiet Dead? I spent a day wondering if the court of Henry VIII would be Doctor Who... to be shot! Filming on Turn Left started one day earlier, didn't it?

better, but that's not Christmassy enough. You'd have a banquet, but no turkey. It'd So this is still (sort of) the 50th something after all. My fanboy mind is delighted.

be flagstones, knights, swords and funny trousers, none of which feels Christmas Day enough. Plus, translating Victorian into Tudor is hardly a solution; it's just a disguise. Text message from: Russell

How about something completely new? After the Torchwood press launch in London Sent: 07-Dec-2007 16:18

on Monday, I spent the night in a large, faceless Paddington hotel. I couldn't sleep, Ha ha ha, oh, your fanboyness! I love it. Yes, Turn

Left started a day earlier,

so I went for some ice at 2am. All the big, wide corridors were empty. Not a noise. so it definitely came first. That's cheered me up. I'll sleep easier in my bed

The machine on Floor 2 wasn't working, so I went up to Floor 3. Still empty. The tonight.

lift shafts were sort of humming, almost roaring. It was eerie. And I imagined, what

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CHAPTER TEN

HOLDING

THE LINE

In which working on Doctor Who is likened to al-Qaeda,

Russell loses his trousers in Soho, and Catherine Tate

sparks a major diplomatic incident

FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 7 DECEMBER 2007 21:09:20 GMT

RE: CRUSADER 52?

Huge movements on Series Five. Piers Wenger has said yes to Julie's job -- to the

whole job, Head of Drama at BBC Wales, everything. However, with the usual Doctor

Who madness, *The Guardian* has got hold of it, so a press release has had to go out,

announcing Julie's departure... in 18 months' time! This is the only job where that gets

reported so far in advance! Even Tony Blair kept us guessing for longer.

It's our production manager Tracie Simpson's farewell party on Monday. First Tracie,

then it'll be Phil, and now Julie is off. It's the end, slowly. Piers and Steven had a train

journey back from Cardiff together on Tuesday, so you could say that work on Series

Five has already begun. That's weird. Actually, it doesn't feel weird - I'm not sure I feel

anything at all about it. But as a fanboy - how exciting! That's a brilliant team.

RE: CRUSADER 52?

I spent today considering one tangible thing: whether to destroy New York in 4.12.



That would be fun, wouldn't it? The idea came from the fact that all the Doctor's

companions are found in England. I've a chance to expand on that, create a bigger

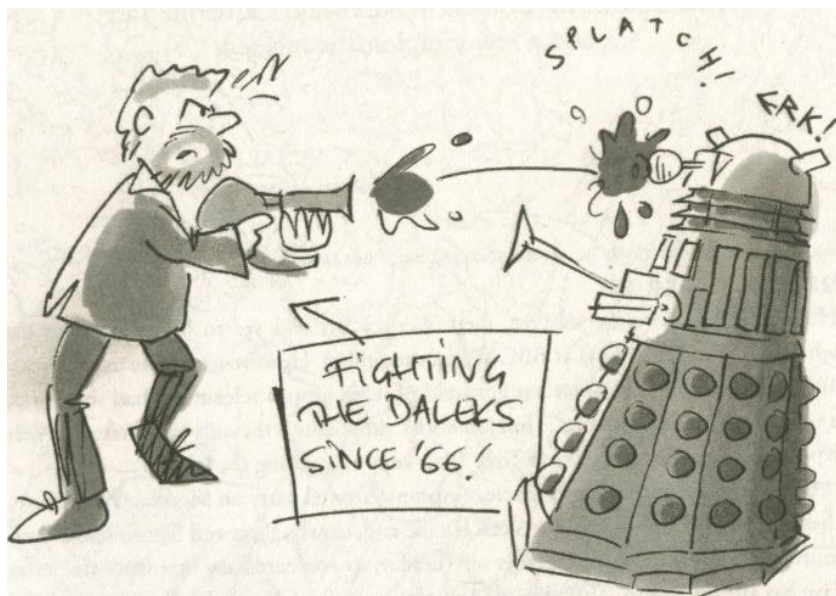
world. Maybe Martha is in New York? She'd have to be saved, maybe by trying some

experimental UNIT teleport that zaps her out of the building before Dalek lasers

@yuliasha

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TEN: HOLDING THE LINE

hit. The only survivor! It suits Martha, that lone warrior feel, and brings her back to hooting. I said, 'Til see what I can do.' It could be brilliant -- if only because Bernard England with an easy zap. But destroying New York has its problems: it leaves heavy Cribbins requested it. I'd better not tell the rest of the cast that I'm taking requests! repercussions for the rest of Doctor Who history, because there's no reset button. I

worry about that. Series Five is bound to have episodes set on modern-day Earth

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL DAVIES, MONDAY

10 DECEMBER 2007 03:28:47 GMT

-- and that might be hard to establish, because it'd be a very wounded world. It even

of 4.13, with the Doctor flying planet Earth back home, all happy

Look, 3:21am that last e-mail was sent! Do you never sleep? Once again, we're both and hooray... except for that smouldering crater with millions dead! These e-mails do

still up at ridiculous o'clock. Why don't we just work in offices, Russell? Wouldn't that influence things, definitely, because now I'm thinking, no, destroying New York is a

be easier? Don't you think? Go on, tell me why you don't work nine-to-five in an office. bad choice. Typing it out in this e-mail made me realise that, but it's good to spend a

Why isn't that the life for you? day considering the option. This is the only job in the world where you can do that.

Unless you work for al-Qaeda, I suppose. I might not destroy New York at all, but
the
FROM: RUSSELL DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 10
DECEMBER 2007 04:05:01 SMT

thought is a good indication that I need to work harder to establish a worldwide
feel.
RE: CRUSADER 52?

funny you should ask, because I afc/work in offices, in TV, for years and years, but I
fitted those hours. When I was storylining the soap Revelations, I was locked in an
with a brilliant man called Paul Marquess, who went on to create Footballers'

We had such a laugh. One of the best times of my working life. I refused to start

at 9am. I physically couldn't. We'd be in the office at 9am every day, but we'd
hoot and gossip. We fancied a man down the corridor, called Tony Gregory, and
excuses to walk past his door 15 times a day. We'd sit with Pritt Stick and Tipp-
and the photocopier, and invent Revelations paperback covers. We had a trainee called
who we'd torment all day, because he was the token straight in a sea of gays. But
around about 4pm, we'd start work -- and we'd be there till gone midnight, because
we'd work hard and properly. I loved storylining. Those ideas were watertight and
Looking back, I probably drove Paul mad. Every so often, he'd say, plaintively,
we do some work now?' But I'd be busy cutting out cast photos and giving them
mouths like Captain Pugwash, so I could act out the shows in puppet form! I
making a nine-to-five office job fit me. But that was the mid '90s, when I was
set on leaving to become a writer. I knew what I wanted. I was only storylining
so that I'd get to write the best episodes. But before that...

read those interviews with people who say 'I knew that I wanted to become a writer

I was six years old' with such envy. I didn't know. For a long time. Partly because
a writer didn't even seem like an option. It was like wishing to be a pop star
a mountaineer or a pianist. In my head, I was writing all the time, in the sense of
I'm definitely doing Bernard Cribbins and the paint gun, though. Did I tell you this?

up stories, but I thought that was just thinking. Like, that's how people think.

He phoned me up a while back - I love getting phone calls off Bernard - and said, 'Is
it true we're meeting the Daleks in the last episodes?' 'Yes, Bernard.' 'I've fought
them I thought everyone did it. Daydreaming. Doodling.
Literally doodling - I'd draw all

time. All that energy went into cartooning. Just as a hobby, but a compulsive
before, you know!' 'I know, Bernard, it was 41 years ago.' 'I've always had this great
idea,' he said. 'You know those paint gun things? You could take out a Dalek
with hobby. Everything I drew, I'd expand into stories.
When I was 15, 16, I'd imagine

a Marvel artist. (A careers teacher said, 'You're colour blind. You'll never work
a paint gun, cos it's only got one eye. Bit of paint on the eye, it'd be blinded!' I was

the graphics industry if you're colour blind,' and crushed that dream dead.) Even at

I Bernard Cribbins played police constable Tom Campbell in the 1966 movie Daleks - Invasion Earth 2150 A.D., based
on the Oxford University, I poured all that energy into drawing. I had a cartoon strip in the
1964 Doctor Who television serial The Dalek Invasion of Earth.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

TEN: HOLDING THE LINE

student newspaper. I'd illustrate the Student Handbook. Far more important to

me **MOFFAT'S NUMBER 5** than

lectures. After Oxford, I went to Cardiff to do a postgraduate course in Theatre

December

2007, and work on Series Five is well under way...Studies, because I couldn't think what else to do with my life, but even then I was

drawing all the time. I covered my bedroom wall with my own artwork. I became a

FROM: STEVEN MOFFAT TO: RUSSELL DAVIES.
MONDAY 10 DECEMBER 2007 15:20-22 GMT

poster designer for Cardiff's Sherman Theatre. Drew some of my best stuff ever.

One THE FUTURE of my first TV jobs was illustrating a. Jackanory-type show for BBC Wales.

Russell! When you've some time, can we have a chat? I've a few practical points

When I landed my first producing job, on Why Don't You... ?, a magazine show with a that I'd like to talk over with you. And since I'm starting to think about this for real

gang of kids showing you things to do in the school holidays, my real passion was the (blimey!), I'm realising that I probably shouldn't hide myself away from spoilers like

Fact Pack, a free photocopy that we'd send out to viewers, packed with games, recipes, the whimpering fanboy that I am. Is it okay if I read your finale scripts when they're

puzzles and stuff. I started to expand the illustrations into cartoon adventures. I was done, just in case there are any crossovers with all the nonsense currently in my

meant to be illustrating recipes, which was boring, so I thought it'd be fun if I brought head? If I wait to see the episodes, I'll be deep in new stuff, couises will be set, and it

a Potato to life. Then he needed someone to talk to, so I added an Egg and a Plastic wouldn't be the first time that we've both blundered into the same idea.

Cup. They started to grow personalities, way beyond the gags. Potato was bullish and One other thing, which I've been meaning to say. You're alwaysso kind and positive,

verbose, Egg was simple and sweet, Plastic Cup was sarky, sly and undoubtedly

gay. you'd never let it show, but I realise it can't be easy to hand over a show like this one

Their simple lives started to develop into stories. I drew one where the Stationery - so please understand, I appreciate that and I'm hugely grateful for the chance that

Cupboard went to war with the Kitchen, which is still one of the best things I've I'm getting. I'll try not to be some irritating little Scottish bastard measuring up your

ever done. Eventually, whole pages of the Fact Packs were given over to them, and house for curtains. And boy do I need some more macho metaphors.

their adventures became more and more epic. I was obsessive about it. At one point,

FROM:

RUSSELL DAVIES TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, MONDAY 10 DECEMBER 2007 20:35:22 GMT

I started sort of seeing a very nice hairdresser called Mark, but I had a Fact Pack to

complete and gave it more time than I did him. Eventually, he said, "This is never going **RE: THE FUTURE**

to work. That drawing's more important to you than I am.' He was right. Obsession D'you know what? It is easy to hand over this show, now that I know it's to you.

sounds like a bad thing, but it was more like love. I loved those cartoons. I still do. No kidding. No niceties. If it were going to some Holby committee, or some idiot,

During all this, I had the day job on Why Don't You... ? proper. That was the office job. or some stranger, I'd be terrified, in a good old-fashioned fanboy way. But it's you.

Organising schedules, material, rehearsals and stuff. Edits. Dubs. Lunch in the canteen. It's simply you. I think that's glorious. And I've genuinely had enough, while still

The nine-to-five job. But I glided through that. The real stuff, the creativity, for me, loving it with all my heart. That feels good, getting out while still loving it. (Imagine

was drawing Potato fighting Paperclips, at night, at home, in the cartoons - and then going off Doctor Who!!!) So I'm really, really happy. You're not just measuring for

the same thing started to happen to my Why Don't You... ? scripts. I started to

dramatise curtains, you nonce. You're knocking down that wall, building an extension - hell,

the whole thing, declaring it unsafe, and building a brand new house in

them. I couldn't help it. Scenes would link together. Gags would become running jokes.

place. Like there's any stopping you!

The kid presenters grew screen personalities - one daft, one cheeky, one mad - so that

they could interact better. They started to have adventures. One week, they went off to When are we having this famous chat, then? I'm in London for the launch on 18

explore Loch Ness, to find the Loch Ness Monster. That episode was the first time that I December. What if I came early? Are you free? Or how about the day after? Stories

beginning to prey on my mind, too. I'll park the Doctor wherever you need

realised what I'd done. I remember, clearly, going home and thinking, take out the

You decide! If you decide on more of an overlap, then the Specials can contain

recipes and I've just written a drama! I only realised it after I'd written it. Not everyone

Five elements that'd be absolutely yours. I know, I'm so nobl! But its all for

liked it, of course. The Head of Children's Television, Anna Home, did comment, 'It's

good of the show. That's all that matters. If I'm taking time :o think of the three

not supposed to be a drama. You're failing the magazine content.' That was true. I guess

and you've started formulating a whole series - oh, go on, you've started

that was an official slap-down. But I ignored it. Like you do. You're cheeky when you're

haven't you? -- then we'll just swap roles, so you go first, you tell me what young.

you're
planning (not in too much detail, thank you - think of my fanboy heart), and

In my final year on Why Don't You... ?, for my very last episode, I really went for it:

I'll
make sure that the Specials lead seamlessly into Series Five. That should work.

recipes and puzzles and makes were chucked out of the window, and the Why Don't

You... ? gang found themselves trapped in their cellar with an insane supercomputer,

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TEN: HOLDING THE LINE

FROM: STEVEN MGFFAT TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 11:47:26
GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 10 DECEMBER 2007 23:39:02 GMT

RE: THE
FUTURE RE:

CRUSADER 52?I'm so glad that you still love it. I've asked you every year, but I was too nervous to
this I've just got back from Tracie Simpson's surprise farewell party. It was a genuine surprise,time.
That's honestly a relief to hear. I think. She
looked shell-shocked, instead of acting all fake-surprised. I think we really

got
her! Wonderful party. You can just tell that it's going to escalate all night. They'reFROM: STEVEN MOFFAT TO:
RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2007 09:37:50 GMT going to be off their heads.
I've come home, genuinely sad. Deeply sad, actually. It'sRE: THE
FUTURE starting to
sink in: this is the beginning of the end. Phil gave a beautiful speech. HeActually, never mind all that, I'm
wittering like agirl. I've worked out my openingepisode! described our very first block of filming,
back in 2004, when, after one week, we were

three
weeks behind. Oh, those dark, dark days. With all our massive experience, well's good, honest!

still
had no idea how to make a show like Doctor Who. No one did. Tonight, Phil said,FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES
TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2007 10:30:45 GMT

'We
had the BBC's new flagship in tatters, just one week in.' They were filming on the

estate, and Phil just couldn't take it any more. He burst into tears. He phonedRE: THE FUTURE
Tyler's

Julie.
Julie calmed him down, and then she said those fateful words: 'I'm sending youI knew it! Exciting, isn't it?!
Oh, I bet you're having fun.

someone.'
That someone was Tracie. From the next day onwards, the whole show ran

»I'm so glad you still love it« No kidding. Every

better.
We got it made thanks to Tracie. And in the history of Doctor Who, she's going
second. Bloody love it.

to
look like a footnoted crewmember. Amazing woman. Every single person in that
room
tonight loves her.

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Anyway,
gobsmacking 4.11 rushes today. No kidding, one of the finest pieces ofwhich they defeated with an

electric, lemon-powered skateboard. We tripled the ratings! acting I have ever seen -- when Catherine realises that she's going to die. She's cryingTurning it into a drama sent that show from 0.9 million to 2.9. We were carried with horror. Absolutely perfect. I texted her to say thanks. She's a very private person,

I'm never 100 per cent sure what she thinks about things, but she texted back: T'm soaround Television Centre in a ticker-tape parade (not really, but almost). After I left,

lucky to be doing all this. It's wonderful to be part of it.' That made me happy. Verythe show went back to its magazine format... and ratings fell to 0.9 million again. Ha!

happy. For many hours. But then I had a terrible conversation with Julie...Seriously, that was me realising how powerful drama can be, how it can draw you in

I'd e-mailed her asking about delivery dates. She e-mailed back saying that 4.12/4.13and build an audience. But I only did it because I like stories. Storytelling just bleeds

is due by 7 January, and the 2008 Christmas Special (officially designated 4.14) is dueout. Of course, much of it was disguised as drawing. I can still see cartooning in my

by -- gulp -- 18 February. Ten minutes later, she phones up:work (cue internet insults), in the speed and the fast cuts, the visual gags, the pacing

of the dialogue, but now my hobby is my life. That's why I never think of it as work,

no matter how much hard graft I actually do. Even if no one ever saw this stuff,

I'd be doing it anyway. I know why you're asking. This is impossible, isn't it?

Nowadays, by the way, I run screaming from the notion of nine-to-five office life.

Four years on Doctor Who, and I've never had an office. Never even had a desk. It'd be Well, I'll try.

handy sometimes, to have somewhere to escape to or sit and think on my own when

trapped in BBC Wales, but it wouldn't work. I'd end up drawing on the walls.

No, impossible, isn't it?

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 10 DECEMBER 2007 10:07:36 GMT

RE: CRUSADER

52?

Well... it's bad.

»I never think of it as work, really, no matter how much hard graft I actually do. Even

if no one ever saw this stuff, I'd be doing it anyway.« JULIE

I believe that. I'm going to quote it back at you next time it all gets too much. I'm

you think you can do it?

going to make you write it out and stick it above your computer!

12 and 13, fine, I'll have that done. Maybe not

by the 7th, but certainly 12, and enough of 13 to be

on with, and a good synopsis of the ending for you

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TEN: HOLDING THE LINE DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

to work
from. JULIE
Right. Then that's
what we'll do.

JULIE
But then you'll have to work on that, rewriting it
and RUSSELL
getting the FX to budget. That's another two weeks at We hold the
line?

least. That leaves you three weeks for Christmas 2008.
Can you do
it? JULIE
We hold the line.

RUSSELL
Urn...
So we're blundering on.
Into the darkness. That conversation has scared me. Julie is

JULIE going to try to find
money to give us an extra week so that we can stand down for seven
I have a plan of attack. First option is the worst case
days before filming 4.14.
That would give me an extra week to write, so the deadline
scenario: we just don't do a Special for Christmas 2008.

would be 25 February.
Julie never, ever gives up. She fights. Also, she leads you into
RUSSELL conversations like the
one above. You find yourself speaking your darkest fears. They
Oh.

become tangible so that
you can deal with them. You're not alone.

Long, long pause. Telephone wires humming. Then JULIE says, I think I would
back down and give up if BBC One didn't have a new Controller,
quietly: Jay Hunt, whose
appointment was announced last week. We need her on our side,

JULIE we need her to be waving the flag for Doctor Who, more than ever, so that we're not

That 'oh' is the happiest I've heard you sound in four slipping back to become an also-ran. It's absolutely the wrong time for Doctor Who to or five years. fall out of the schedules. So. We hold the line. I keep going.

RUSSELL Which means I'm going to start 4.12, right... I just said 'oh'!

JULIE

DAVIES, TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 00:04:56 GMT FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T No, that was a very big 'oh' .

RUSSELL RE: CRUSADER 52? You've started! (But have you really started?)

I meant 'oh', that's all, just 'oh'. One question (but answer it later - don't let me distract you from 4.12): filming Series One, back in 2004, how, after one week, is it possible to be three weeks behind

JULIE schedule? That 'oh' was like, oh the relief. It was joyous.

BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 02:20:47 GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:

RUSSELL But what would the channel say? 4.12 Julie is so sad tonight. She's crying. It really has hit home. The slow end. Funnily

JULIE enough, it's sort of helping me - makes me determined to write. All those brilliant They'd be devastated.

people on the crew, I've got to write something excellent for them, something that's RUSSELL worth all their time and effort. Yeah, how noble. That'll evaporate by tomorrow.

Then we can't do it.

»filming Series One,
back in 2004, how, after one week, is it possible to be three
JULIE weeks behind
schedule?»

It's the amount that
you plan to complete each day. For his speech at Tracie's party,

We have to, if you can't write it.

Phil had dug out our
very first callsheets, and we couldn't believe them. Like, we'd

RUSSELL planned four pages on
the Tyler's estate in the morning - that was just the morning! --

But in times like this, when we're scared of the then a move across
London and another four pages, with monsters and FX and closing

schedule and feel like running away or stopping, you

always say, hold the line. We hold the line. You always

say that.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TEN: HOLDING THE LINE

off Whitehall. That number of pages - or more - is quite normal for most dramas,
but FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 18:51:14 GMT

we discovered that Doctor Who is more like four to five pages a day. That's why,
after RE: 4.12 that first week, we had a backlog of three weeks' material
still to shoot. (I can't believe That's tricky. I don't type 'DONNA' and then
think, now, how would she say this...?that it was actually three -- I think that's
become a good legend -- but the point still The fact that I've typed
'DONNA' means that she already has something to say. You stands.) It was
terrifying. And guess what Julie said? 'Hold the line!' I was offering to can
worry too much about speech patterns, about imposing different styles on
therewrite, to cut, to scale down, to seriously change the vision of what the show
should words, one for Rose, one for Donna, one for Martha, one for Sarah
Jane. They're be, to make it achievable, but no -- 'Hold the line!' And we did, and
we learnt, and we all women, on the side of good, in a sci-fi world, so
their speeches aren't going to be more realistic, and faster, and
better. radically different. It's not so
much what they say, as why they say it and when.

Anyway, 4.12 has begun. As an opening seven pages, it could hardly be more
exciting. But I suppose there's a basic characteristic that I bear in mind.
An essence. Rose

I'm stopping now, not because I'm tired but because I'm terrified. It's taken seven
pages is open, honest, heartfelt, to the point of being selfish, wonderfully
selfish. Martha

to get this far into the plot, which means that this episode might be 5,000 pages
long! is clever, calm, but rarely says what she's really thinking. Donna is
blunt, precise,

I'm going to have to get it
moving. unfiltered, but with a big
heart beneath all the banter. But we come back to what I was

saying
ages ago about turning characters. If Rose can be selfish, then her finest moments

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 15:53:26
GMT will come when she's selfless. If Martha keeps quiet, then her
moments of revelation

like her goodbye to the Doctor in Last of the Time Lords, or stuck with Milo and

RE: 4.12

The Hub! Sarah Jane's attic! Chiswick! Only another 4,993 pages to go, Russell. Cheen in Gridlock - make her fly. Donna is magnificently self-centred - not selfish,

but she pivots everything around herself, as we all do -- so when she opens up and hears

Hurry up!

the Ood song, or begs for Caecilius' family to be saved, then she's wonderful.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 17:55:06 GMT

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2007 03:14:05 GMT FROM:

RE: 4.12

4.12 **RE:**

I haven't even opened 4.12 today. I'm flinching slightly. It's like I wrote that in a blur. I

The line is holding! So far. Here's some more. I'm stopping now. I need to think ahead. can feel the million problems ahead. No, the zillion.

There are three or four interesting options for what happens next, and I need to find

But I was asked on holiday today. By a 71-year-old woman in Cardiff Bay! I bumped the right one.

into Gary Russell while I was having my daily coffee in the Bay -- at Coffee Mania,

It's an odd script, isn't it? The concept is so huge that the dialogue is quite perfunctory and the fact that the man serving there was voted seventh in Wales' Most Eligible

and plot-based. I'm fighting to get any character in there. The Doctor and Donna have Bachelors has nothing to do with it -- and we had a chat. Me and Gary, not me and Mr

to talk about plot, plot, plot - it would sound mad if they didn't - and the others are

Eligible. Then Gary plodded on his way, to the dentist, and that's when the 71-year-

talking

in that sort of brusque signature dialogue. Like Martha's 'I'm not a soldier,
old approached me. She said, 'I'm going to Malta in January, and I think the perfect

I'm
a medic'. Signature dialogue is saying 'This is who I am'. It's very obvious, but the
travelling companion would be an older gay man.' Older?! Let alone the gay bit!
I was size of the cast demands those simple distinctions. Also, I'm
strangely aware of people

just sitting there having a coffee. I wasn't exactly wearing a
dress. watching this for the first time, even though it's an
unashamed continuity-fest, so

all
the characters are stating their presence, as if for newcomers. And lanto is quietly

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 11 DECEMBER 2007 18:22:33 GMT

stealing
the show. This is deliberate, so that Gareth David-Lloyd will love me. I'm only

RE:

4.12 half-
joking. Somewhere in the subconscious, I think you cast handsome men so that

Gary Russell got you a holiday to Malta? In January? Maybe he should go with
her. you can impress them. Yeah, and it really works. Well, maybe one
day. Oh, just once.

Now, there's a drama. I'd have said yes like a shot. You've missed out,
Russell. I'm still fighting to keep the cost down. I wrote the last few
scenes with loads of FX

Now that you're into 4.12/4.13, with its not inconsiderable cast list, I'm
interested - Dalek space station, Dalek saucers, hurtling towards Earth - but I
need the money

in how your approaches to writing, say, Rose, Martha and Donna differ? Is it
what later on. It was spectacular, but expensive, so I deleted all the FX
and made the whole

different characters say or how they say it that defines them, makes them 'come
alive', thing work with cheap radar graphics. I think it's better, actually.
Captain Jack, Sarah

makes them
distinguishable? Jane and
Martha can't see what's happening, not until the Dalek ships (com p281)

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TEN: HOLDING THE LINE

sc.36-40 now entirely experienced as grainy TV FOOTAGE.:

DEATH OF A PM

CAMERA capturing SAUCER, as it descends on

sequence, written on 13 December 2007 and featuring UK Prime Minister Aubrey Fairchild, was cut from Russell's original draft of The Stolen

TO:*Earth...*

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

31. INT. NOBLES' HOUSE -
NIGHT GRABBED
HANDHELD SHOTS of PEOPLE, running, looking back, and

in terror, fleeing from the saucer.

WILF & SYLVIA watching the events of sc.35-40 on TV.

TO:

TO:

EXT. CIVIC BUILDINGS - NIGHT

32. INT. UNIT HQ, NEW YORK CITY - NIGHT

CAMERA, from a DISTANCE, capturing PRIME MINISTER

MARTHA & UNIT watching sc.35-40 on the big screen. (Don't see

FAIRCHILD, TWO AIDES and a BRITISH ARMY COLONEL walking

the screen here; ADR Trinity Wells will describe an
American up to a scaffolding platform, like
someone has quickly

equivalent of events, a saucer approaching the White
House, arranged a public meeting.

landing - but 00V!) .1

no need for real Whitehall, just civic-type buildings in

TO:

b/g, all shot close, grabbed, shaky),

33. INT. SARAH JANE SMITH'S ATTIC -

MIGHT

00V

getting pictures live from Westminster, we're

SARAH JANE & LORE, watching sc.35-40 on MR
SMITH.2 seeing Prime Minister

Aubrey Fairchild... It seems he's

forward. To greet the visitors.

TO:

WHIP PAN from Aubrey to a HANDHELD SHOT of a SAUCER,

34. INT. THE TORCHWOOD HUB -
NIGHT lowering
down...

GWEN S IANTO watching the events of sc.35-40 on a
computer, CUT TO HANDHELD Aubrey &
staff, buffeted by wind, but

CAPTAIN JACK in b/g, on his mobile,
desperate: remaining resolute,
holding their ground...

CAPTAIN

JACK

TO:

This is Captain Jack Harkness, I'm calling from

Torchwood - I don't care, just tell the Prime Minister
to 39.EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

get out of there!!

HANDHELD SHOTS - PEOPLE still running, but some have

So sc.31-34 are layered in
with: stopped.
Looking up in awe. Terror. One man joyous.

TO: COT Ti
35. INT. NEWSREADER STUDIO -
NIGHT 40. EXT.
CIVIC BUILDINGS - NIGHT

CAMERA jerkily ZOOMS INTO CU AUBREY FAIRCHILD, as he
NEWSREADER TO
CAMERA: goes
to a microphone-stand. A brave man.

NEWSREADER
FAIRCHILD
- reports are confused, but... It's being said, one of
the Visitors to Earth. We welcome you. We
ask you for help,
saucers is descending towards
Westminster... in this strange
wilderness. But roost of all, I seek to
you... The Human Race comes in peace.

TO:
1 Trinity Wells (played by Lachele Carl) is an American newsreader who
first appeared in Doctor Who 1.4. and has since FX: HANDHELD WHIP-PAN
over to the SAUCER, as a huge BRONZE featured in several episodes of Doctor Who
Series One to Four, The Sarah -tone Adventures and Torchwood..
2 Mr Smith is the supercomputer in Sarah Jane's attic.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TEN: HOLDING THE LINE

DOOR begins to lower...

CUT TO ADBREY & STAFF, HANDHELD, their fear, their hope...

(Still INTERCUT WITH SC,31-34, Milf & Sylvia staring,
Sarah



Jane holding Luke, terrified, saying quietly 'No, no, don't,
no...' , Captain Jack now back at the screen with Gwen & lanto,
muttering, 'Get out of there, just get out,..')

FX: HANDHELD, the DOOR completing its descent, to become a
RAMP. Beyond, the interior of the ship: PITCH BLACK.

And then...

Just a voice.

DALEK

Exterminate!

FX: HANDHELD, ENERGY BOLT shoots out of the pitch-black -

really arrive on
Earth, which makes them more helpless. Good rewrite. Even if we

could afford the FX,

I think I'd keep it like that now.

FX: HANDHELD , AUBREY struck, skeleton, he screams & dies!

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK

TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2007 03:36:30 GMT

FX: HANDHELD: a SWARM OF DALEKS flies out!

RE: 4.12

CUT TO:

The Shadow

Proclamation!2 Ooh, this is good! (Invisible Ben is on holiday in Cornwall.

41. INT. CRUCIBLE COMMAND DECK - NIGHT With
Maria and her dad.)3 Hey, the professor on the Newsnight-type show in Scene 14

should so be Richard

Dawkins.4 I bet he'd do it.

THE CRUCIBLE is the Dalek ship at the heart of the web. Huge,

You say that

you're considering three or four interesting options now. What are

dark space, with 1,13-type designs. Start close, shot tight,

DALEK 1 gliding into position --

they?

DALEK 1

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES

TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 12 DECEMBER 2007 14:27:34 GMT

Dalek fleet in battle formation!

RE: 4.12

. - tracking across DALEK 2, then 3, then

4, gliding in -

Richard Dawkins!

Brilliant! I'm going to try that. Leave Invisible Ben in Cornwall.

Visible Ben is full of

good ideas. Mind you, if I was invisible and in Cornwall with

DALEK 2 All

Maria's dad, I

know what I'd be doing... The options... hmm, I haven't woken up with
systems locked and primed!

much clarity. I had a

bad night's sleep,

DALEK 3

Crucible at 90% efficiency!

2 First referenced in

Doctor Who 1.1, the Shadow Proclamation turns out to be the 'futuristic space station complex where lots



of alien races are gathered for a conference¹, mentioned in the Series Four Breakdown.

DALEK 4 The ³ The Sarah Jane Adventures characters Maria Jackson (played by Yasmin Paige) and her father Alan (Joseph Millson) are.

apparently, in Cornwall during Doctor Who 4.12/4.13, and Clyde Langer (Daniel Anthony) is 'with his mum', although Sarah

Human Harvest will commence! Jane and her son, Luke (Tommy Knight), do feature.

⁴ In this draft, an 'elderly professor' (Professor Richard Dawkins in subsequent drafts and the transmitted episode) appears

on a /Vewsn/gftr-type TV show to discuss the 17 planets that have appeared in Earth's orbit.

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one.

But that's weird... All frequencies jammed. They're on

sort of Red Alert...

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 13 DECEMBER 2007 02:21:32 GMT
He looks up.

RE: 4.12

is just standing against the rail. She's been crying,

Here's some more. Scary page numbers. I thought I'd be on Page 12 by now, but these doesn't like to show it. He goes to her, kind.

events have taken me up to Page 20 already. I've thought about this for so long that I've

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

become used to it, so it seemed smaller, more compact, in my head. I'm thinking ahead

find them, Donna. I'll travel this whole wide universe to

now and cutting huge chunks of future story as I go. New York has now becoming a find them, I swear. It's not just your home.

That daft little

pain in the arse, because it traps Martha there and her escape -- 'Project Indigo' -- is planet is the closest thing I've got.

many pages long. It might have to be sacrificed.

Sure.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 13 DECEMBER 2007 23:32:18 GMT

The Doctor runs back to the console -

RE: 4.12

The Doctor is about to arrive at the Shadow Proclamation, but warning bells are ringing.
THE DOCTOR

here! The Shadow Proclamation!

He's meant to stride in with Donna, into some great hall, and, in a The Mill/Neill Gorton extravaganza, walk past every creature we've ever had. Krillitanes swooping. Judoon
TO:

stomping. Slitheen farting. Maybe even an Isolus fluttering past. I've even thought of a

FX SHOT

way to include Margaret Slitheen, fleetingly.⁵ But now I'm dreading it. It's going to eat up money. Money that is clearly better spent on the Dalek invasion of Earth. So I'm stalling.

THE SHADOW PROCLAMATION. DMP only; a huge installation, metal

I hate writing something that might never be made. I haven't the time to waste! Trouble is, sc-fi towers ranged across a series of linked asteroids, hanging

space, like a Roger Dean painting.

Will Cohen is dying to animate this sequence. He's been looking forward to it for months.

So I'm writing to you instead of getting on with it. But I think typing that was therapy.

Over that, the sound of the Tardis engines...

⁵ Blon Fel-Fotch Pasameer-Day Slitheen (played by Annette Badland) appeared in Doctor Who 1.4/1.5 and 1.11, having

appropriated the identity and skin of human MIS official Margaret Blaine. Following an encounter with the Doctor, Blon was ⁶ Scenes 45-48, written on 14 December 2007, didn't make it to the shooting script.

regressed to an egg and returned to the hatchery on Raxacoricofallapatorius.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
TEN: HOLDING THE LINE			

CUT TO:

DOCTOR

You should meet

the Brotherhood of Darkened Time. That's

47.	INT.	SHADOW	PROCLAMATION	LOBBY	-
NIGHT		the accountants.			

CLOSE ON THE DOCTOR & DONNA - who's recovering, brave face on -
TWO SLITHEEN & BABY SLITHEEN walk past, fast -
both stepping out -

	THE DOCTOR	Cor, what a
stink!		
- right, the first thing we've got to do is -		

DOCTOR

Stops dead, as a PLATOON OF JUDOON march past, big, heavy
boots stomping, left to right - the Doctor & Donna nipping
Slitheen -The That's the
through a gap in the formation, pushing forward -
Slitheen turn
round, furious -

	THE	DOCTOR
(CONT'D)		
	SLITHEEN	
- whoops, 'scuse me, sorry -		

	We are not
Slitheen! Slitheen are criminals! We are	
	Jingatheen!

FX: THREE KRILLITANES swoop down, the Doctor & Donna brushing
them off, still pushing forward -
THE DOCTOR

	Sorry.	Easy
mistake. Tell me, what's everyone doing		
DONNA	here?	

Oy! Get off!

SLIT

THE DOCTOR
universe is on red alert! Planets have

The whole

Keep your wings in, you lot!
Dozens of them! We have lost Clom!

disappeared!

- then stopped by TWO VESPIFORMS, buzzing right to left -
THE DOCTOR

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D) - Clom's
gone?! Clom's SLITHEEN

oh, mind those stings, thank you -

The Doctor's Donna then stopping to look properly. Gulp. gone!
What's Clom? DONNA

FX: WIDE SHOT. Big, white, open smart-sci-fi-building.
Filled SLITHEEN

with CROWD MULTIPLICATION JUDOON, CROWD
MULTIPLICATION Our twin planet! Without it, Raxacoricofallapatorius
will

SLITHEEN, a few HATH, two HELMETED SYCORAX, and
CROWD fall out of the sky!

MULTIPLICATION SPACE-EXTRAS - some in big opera
cloaks, (turns to go)

SISTERS OF THE WICKER PLACE MAT from 1.2, plus a lot of
MONKS We must phone home -

& NUNS. Also, SHADOW POLICE - like Judoon, but Human, in
big (to Baby Slitheen)

stompy black uniforms. Flying through the air, KRILLITANES, - this
way, Margaret.

VESPIFORMS, GELTH. And in one corner, a huge 15ft ADIPOSE,
mewling. All busy, chaotic, emergency! Baby Slitheen
talks with the VOICE OF MARGARET ELAINE:

CUT BACK TO the Doctor & Donna.

BABY

SLITHEEN

DONNA

Is it always this busy? What is the Shadow Proclamation
home, Daddy, I don't like the nasty policemen! Take me

anyway?

THE

DOCTOR

THE

DOCTOR

...Margaret...?

Police. Outer space police.

D

DONNA

Name like that, I was expecting all druids and cloaks
you! And she shoves him forward,
and incense.

Come on,

out of frame -

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER TEN:
HOLDING THE LINE			
CUT TO A RECEPTION DESK, manned by Judoon, one unmasked with	JUDOON		
RHINO HEAD. (All monks & nuns & opera-types crowding b/g, no Stand in line.			Take number.
FX.)			
			DONNA
A GRASKE is standing on the desk, furious.			But this is important!
			JUDOON
GRASKE			
line.			Take a number. Stand in
Planet gone! Not good! Very bad!			
			The Doctor takes a number
from a supermarket-style dispenser -			
THE DOCTOR & DONNA walking up, the Doctor just scooping the			
Graske off the desk and putting him down out of frame -			
THE DOCTOR			
eight-nine-			Number one-six-two-five-
THE DOCTOR			
'Scuse me, big fella -			Looks up. DISPLAY: number
003.			
(to the Judoon)			
I'd like to report a missing planet. Another one. It's			THE
DOCTOR (CONT'D)			
called Earth -			You're only on number
three!			
paper)			(psychic
JUDOON			
Judoon High Council, top			I have been sent by the
Number One -			priority, Ambassador
Sco! Bo! Tro! No! Flo! Jo! Ko! Fo! To!			

THE

DOCTOR

JUDOON

Lo! Kro! To! \$ho! Maho?

Stand in line.

JUDOON

THE DOCTOR

(to Donna)

Sco! Sco! Bio! Do! Mo!

I said so, thick!!

(to

Judoon, angry)

DONNA

My name is the Doctor, I

need to see the Chief

Hold on, I thought the Tardis translated alien
can help you -

Constable, right now, I

languages?

The Judoon raises its gun -

THE DOCTOR

Judoon are too thick.

missing planet, Galactic

Location five delta omega -

DONNA

JUDOON

(to the Judoon)

Stand in line!

Listen, you big Rhino. Earth. Missing. Six billion people!

The Doctor steps back - other

MONKS & NUNS pile in, taking

Judoon holds out its translator, at her face.
Donna just figures in the crowd.

their place. The Doctor &

DONNA (CONT'D)

He puts his arm round

her.

Oy, what's it doing, what's that for, what are
you CUT TO:

doing, zoo boy?

The Judoon clips the translator into its chest-port. We hear 48. INT. SHADOW
PROCLAMATION LOBBY - NIGHT A LINE OF

Donna's words back, fast, 'Oywhatsitdoingwhatsthatf...'

JUDOON stomping past...

JUDOON Language

Clearing to reveal DONNA,

sitting alone. Haunted. MONKS, NUNS,
assimilated. Designation: Earth English.

SYCORAX,etc, all around her.

She glances across.At a distance,

DONNA
RECEPTION DESK, surrounded by CROWD.He's

THE DOCTOR, at the

Right, good, that's better, thanks - we need to report a filling in
paperwork,arguing with Judoon Donna looks front.

Lost in thought.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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And as she stares into space...	A SHADOW SOLDIER
(i.e., Human) steps into extreme foreground.	

Real	sound	fades
away...		SHADOW SOLDIER

that, sir?	Can I help you with
------------	---------------------

As she hears...

DOCTOR	THE
--------	-----

A heartbeat.	Triplicate! You've
got 24 planets missing, and you need	

I'm the one and only person who	forms in triplicate!
---------------------------------	----------------------

SLOW ZOOM IN on Donna staring to the distance, lost...	could help,
but no one's listening to me!	

SOLDIER	SHADOW
---------	--------

As it calls to her...

I can listen. I did last
time. And you saved my life,

Doctor.

Then...

The Doctor looks up -

The moment breaks, as a FIGURE steps in foreground. Donna
snaps out of it, looks up:

MIDSHIPMAN FRAME!	And the Shadow Soldier is
-------------------	---------------------------

An ELDERLY NUN. Grave. Staring at her.

I leave you with 4.12
cliffhanging on the best possible words! It may not be possible,

DONNA

typing it.	but we'll see. I enjoyed
------------	--------------------------

Sorry, I was just...

stuff. It's actually the touch of a keystroke to delete it all.

ELDERLY NUN

achieved with Judoon and a couple of Slitheen. Nice to try,

There was something on your back.

to Will, and he said, 'Oh, go on, do it!' So I did.

DONNA

How d'you know that?

BENJAMIN COOK. SATURDAY 15 DECEMBER 2007 14:09:44 GMT

ELDERLY NUN

You have been marked, -child.

weekend. No such luck. Catherine has just said on Jonathan

David's last series! Poor Catherine. My heart sank. You

DONNA

(chilled)

swallowing the words as she said them. In fairness, it's so hard

What does that mean?

remember what's true and what isn't, what's possible and what's

has all gone mad! Press on the phone! BBC News 24 is

ELDERLY NUN

It's like they threaten us. The biggest fight now, in your

You are something new. Something terrible and new.

to stop our Press Office from making a statement. Most people

(touches her cheek) Oh, but destiny

Ross's show, for Christ sake! Just let it lie as rumour and

is cruel. I'm so sorry for your loss.

must have a "line". So what's The Line?

DONNA

...my whole planet's gone.

RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 15 DECEMBER 2007 14:22:15 GMT

ELDERLY NUN

ARSE!

And I wrote the expensive

The same effect can be

though. I expressed my fears

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:

ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!

I was hoping for a quiet

Ross's radio show that this is

could almost hear her

on Doctor Who to

just speculation. But now it

going to run it as a banner!

post-Hutton BBC, is

weren't listening to Jonathan

gossip. 'No,' they say, 'we

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK. TO:

RE: ARSE, ARSE,

confirm or deny anything? Shouldn't the BBC just shut
I mean the loss that is yet to come. God save you.

Why does the BBC have to
up? Wouldn't that be less
damaging?

And the Nun turns and goes.

BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 15 DECEMBER 2007 14:37:48 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:

Donna shaken, disturbed.

RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!

CUT TO THE DOCTOR, at the desk. Head down, scribbling through Exactly! But it's
a hard argument to maintain. Once this juggernaut starts rolling, it's

piles of Judoon paperwork, angry. difficult to stop - and it
threatens to undermine Series Four. We all -Julie, Jane, David

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TEN: HOLDING THE LINE DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

and me -- have to work out an official response. That's David's call, really, though it's told them that I'm making a formal complaint within the BBC. That usually works. our job to help and protect him. And, of course, we've lost Jane Flecher, who used to Eventually, I just stopped answering my phone. By tonight, it calmed down. But now

it's out there, uncontrollable, on BBC News, everywhere, reported as fact. It can't behandle this magnificently. She's sorely missed.

unsaid, ever. It's Doctor Who, for Christ's sake! You'd think we'd assassinated the Prime

We've just spoken to David. He's asked us to confirm, 'No decisioi has been made.'

Minister. What the hell is it like on real news? Poor bastard. He's the one who has to face the press on Tuesday night.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SUNDAY 16 DECEMBER 2007 00:48:39 GMT FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 15 DECEMBER 2007 17: 9:31 GMT

RE:

ARSE, ARSE, ARSE! RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!

Amid all of this, what's Catherine saying on the matter? She must realise the storm that BBC News is reporting that David is leaving Doctor Who. Russell, now has your day she's created. Poor Catherine. gone since Catherine's gaffe? What goes through your mind when S)omething like this happens?

Honestly? FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 16 DECEMBER 2007 01:30:43 GMT

RE:

ARSE, ARSE, ARSE! FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SATURDAY 15 DECEMBER 2007 21:12:29 GMT

That's the one thing I haven't asked. I don't like to. Like you, I wonder what she's said RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE! to David. Probably nothing. It was just a mistake, must have been, and they both I get frustrated, really, because there's a barrage of confusing infomation about the adore each other, big time, so it'll just blow over, I presume. That's the last thing weshow. If you're listening to all the news reports over the past few nonths - not as a need, actor wars. But they're both too intelligent for that. hardcore fan, but as a more casual viewer - you'd have this bizarre whrlwind impression Hey, I had the bloody Mail today describing me as having 'a large, soft, expressive of the Doctor with three companions, and then the show is going of air because David face'. How bloody sexy do I feel? Soft!!! regenerates, except he doesn't, and then Rose goes with him, and hen James Nesbitt

takes over or has he started already...? We sound confused. Publicir and public image
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 17 DECEMBER 2007 15:42:36 GMT
depends on a strict, simple picture. A man and his police box. But low we sound like
RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!a mess. I really, really worry that we sound like old

news, or bad nevs, or boring news. Is that the Mails article claiming that more than one companion in Series FourI worry profoundly about that. On Tuesday, at the press launch, allthe journalists will will 'confuse things', that it isn't Very feminist that Doctor Who has gone from onewant to know about this, putting David under terrible pressure ind obscuring the assistant to a virtual harem', and describing Captain Jack's 'flamboyant sexuality' aspoint of the evening. a 'disruptive axis'? Is the jury still out on whether interviews with the Daily Mail Ate

Meanwhile, this afternoon, the second wave started. I've given n many interviews a good idea, Russell? Didn't your boyfriend tell you that he'd rather you didn't grant

over the years, a lot of journalists have my mobile number. I alwa)s give an interview them interviews? I think I agree with him on this one...

on the condition that they don't use the number again. But of ourse they do. I'm

thick. They phone up from BBC Stoke, BBC Cornwall, BBC Himberside, Galaxy
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 17 DECEMBER 2007 16:08:47 GMT

FM, every bloody Radio Backyard. Though the BBC itself is by fir the worst. When **RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!**

they talk about BBC cutbacks, they can start with those hopeless stringers sitting in Far worse was the article's description of Martha as 'always going to be second best to

Nowhere Land, imagining that they can break a big story by diging through their Rose , followed immediately by a quote from me, making it sound as if I'd said second

contact list. I suppose it's their job, and maybe sometimes it words, but imagine if I best! I'm still waiting to find out if Freema has seen that. I had a feeling that journalist

gave an exclusive to BBC Strathclyde! was going to be dodgy, but I went ahead with it anyway. Why? Well, in the end, it's

The third wave is not just asking for a quote, but asking me to go on this chat show, two pages in the Daily Mail. A great big photo of David and Kylie, a reminder that it's

that chat show, Newsbeat, you name it. The BBC has something called The Grid, a transmitted on Christmas Day (they printed the wrong time, of course - twice), and

depository of phone numbers, which any BBC journalist can consult. I've asked a thats what matters. Harsh, but true. It's publicity. Moreover, that's two pages on me

thousand times for my number to be taken off The Grid. It never is. People even deny and my success, as a gay man, in a paper that vilifies homosexuality. Visibility is a good

its existence! So more and more calls come in, from complete strangers. I sort of hit my way of changing things, and that'll do me. As long as you don't get paid by them. I'd stride by late afternoon, telling them to sod off. If they persisted, I took their name and

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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TEN: HOLDING THE LINE			

never accept
that. rushed to meet
David and Jane for a drink. We had to work out The Line. Catherine

But it hasn't been a great weekend. On top of everything, Andy Pryor has discovered claimed that David is leaving, so what's The Line on that? A one-line response, to bethat Russell Tovey is in a play, The Sea, at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, from January elaborated on at will, but one essential response from all of us, coordinated. I used toto April, so that's our recording block bugged. (I really should have checked first.) laugh at this, but it's needed if you're facing journalists. And what if the new BBC OneMidshipman Frame was going to be vital. I had a lot of that planned out. And now...

Controller demands a 2009 series? What if someone asks about David's mother? Havehmf. He would have been a junior soldier in the Shadow Proclamation. (After the we confirmed how long Catherine is staying for? What are we saying about Billie?*Titanic, I imagined that he'd sort of followed the Doctor's example and set out to do*

What's The Line, The Line, The Bloody Line?! Except people are late, and gossiping,good.) He could have helped the Doctor cut through the red tape at the Proclamation, and pleased to see each other, so half The Lines don't even get discussed. Too late, we'rebut - and this is the best bit -- when the Doctor goes on the run from the authorities, I behind schedule, go, go, go, into the cars, hurry up --wanted Frame to go with him. He'd become a companion! The Doctor, Donna Noble

Actually, I'm making this sound funny. It wasn't funny. It was awful. At the firstand Alonso Frame, on board the TARDIS, searching for the Earth. What a great team!

venue, where we met for a drink beforehand, I pretended that I didn't have anyBut not for long. When they arrive on the Dalek ship in 4.13, then zap! Frame is killed!

cigarettes, just so that I could walk out of the bar and away down the street for 15I wanted that to hurt. I wanted to show how cold the Daleks are, how vicious Davros is,

minutes on my own. Head buzzing with Lines. Freezing cold. Christmas decorations.how much danger they're in, so Alonso would have had to go. Except now he won't be in

Best time I had all night.it at all. That's stalled a plot. What do I do instead?

When we arrived at the Science Museum - well, that's when it hits you, the sheer size

of it. That launch was massive. A proper BBC event. We'd been chosen. It's good that

Text	message	from:
Ben		we're chosen, it's important
for the show, but I didn't enjoy it. It feels wrong somehow.		

Sent: 17-Dec-2007 22:16 It feels like it doesn't fit our show. We make the programme big, blousy and ballsy, but

How are you feeling about tomorrow's press launch, Russell? Also, will I think it's still sort of intimate, a daft little show, no matter how many spaceships are

there be nibbles? on display. It's certainly not corporate. That press launch was corporate. And there was

no time to see anyone. Quick hello to my agent, I'm trying to see if Camille Coduri

Text message from:
Russell has turned up, I'm trying to see if you're there, but no time for that, there are people

Sent: 17-Dec-2007 23:28
whose job it is to herd you in front of the journalists...

I'm dreading it-But there will be nibbles.
Next second, it's that parade of cameras, GMTV, BBC Breakfast, BBC News,

Newsround,

*and you find yourself spouting The Lines, like a puppet. Worse, you slip*FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 19 DECEMBER 2007 11:20:01
GMT into showbiz speak. I find myself saying things like 'There are lots of great surprisesRE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!
coming up.' Who talks like that?! Real people don't talk like that! In the middle of theAs press launches go, that wasn't too bad... was it? Well, the Science Museum was a line-up, I say hello to Russell Tovey. He's in front of GMTV. I'm with Newsround. Wefun choice of venue, at least.
both look embarrassed. You can't say hello properly with lights and cameras in your

face.

Then you get shoved in front of the radio journalists, which is worse, becauseFROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 19 DECEMBER 2007 23:01:36
GMT they're all in one gaggle, so ten different shows want ten different quotes, all at once.RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!
You have to be funny and sarky for Newsbeat, factual for Radio 2, factual-but-edgyI'm home now. I've been here for hours. I've been meaning to answer your e-mail for Radio 5, bland for Galaxy, all at the same time. That's probably where I go wrong.about last night's launch, but I couldn't face it. I hated it. Hated it. I still feel sour. I should be myself. But everyone has a lot of different selves. I think that's why an

It started badly. Me and Julie were running late. We had to rush for the train to evening like this is so dispiriting: I'm left wondering, who am I? And the funny thingLondon. We're always rushing. London is even more of a rush, because of the traffic, is, while I hate it, I'm very aware that if, say, David is following me down the line, thenso Julie had to get changed in my hotel. She's running around in her bra and knickers -- no one actually wants to talk to me anyway. I'm left feeling like nothing again, but inactually, it was a camisole. I had to ask, 'What's that called?' Like we're an old married a different way. The vanity!couple. 'Why d'you have to moisturise your legs?' I shaved them yesterday.' 'Who's Then it's the screening. We're hustled to our seats.

'That's Russell Tovey's boyfriend,'gonna know?' 'Oh, thank you!' (I'll leave you to guess who's who there.) Then we someone points out - and a whole fantasy night dies in my mind. We sit at the front,

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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but The Lines are still buzzing in my mind, and everyone is doing a post-mortem on logos to be digitally removed, at quite some cost. That's how serious some dumb-arsewhat just happened with the journalists. 'What did they ask? What did they say? Were little question can get. So I'm waiting, waiting, waiting, all the time, for some snakethey friendly? Did they ask about Catherine?' A hundred times over, in whispers - question like that.while Bernard Cribbins is saying hello, so that switchback personality is still flickering Then it's the party afterwards. But I can't relax. It's all work. In three hours, I haveto and fro. 'Hello, Bernard!' (The journalists were fine) 'How are you?' (What did half an apple juice and half a Coke. I have to speak to everyone. That's my job. SigningDavid say?) 'Nice to see you.' (Who's giving the first speech?) 'Wait till you see it!' autographs for kids, which is nice, but then the MPs, the bloody MPs, then a man(Where's my radio mic?) from the Youth Hostelling organisation ('Have you ever Youth Hostelled?'), then BBC

Lights down, it begins... and I feel totally disconnected from it. I don't laugh. I bosses (so I have to be nice and ask for more programme money), then more MPsdon't cry. It's the size again - Doctor Who on a giant screen with 500 people watching. - they never, ever say which party they represent. For all I know, I could be thankingNot that a Doctor Who movie couldn't work, but Voyage of the Damned isn't a movie, a Tory. Oh, but there's Annette Badland, except I haven't time to say hello. Actors andit's for TV, so it looks wrong, sounds wrong. I sat there thinking about the differences friends fly past. The people that you want to see get snatched away. I pop out for abetween film and TV. I can see it in action. TV cuts faster, spends much more time in cigarette, but there's Mark Thompson, the BBC Director-General, so suddenly I soundCU, so it looks awful on a big screen, too choppy, too close, too amateur. It's a clumsy like this professional robot. And then he makes it clear that he knows that Steven isand jittery piece of work, blown up. The lovely sound mix, on a sound system this big, taking over, so suddenly I feel like yesterday's robot. And then more MPs, and they'reis distorted, everything divided into clean, separate tracks - music from over there, getting red-wine mouths. Everyone is trying to grab a bit of you. 'I run this website.booms from over there, all unrelated - instead of the proper mix you get on a telly. It's Will you join and endorse it? 'Can we do dinner?' 'Can we, can we, can we?'like a grotesque version of itself. It's a cheap tart. I just stare, feeling nothing. I love The one time I do get five minutes to myself, one of the sci-fi-magazine men is*Voyage of the Damned, and this is making me hate it. Julie keeps saying, 'There's too* drunk and won't leave me alone, while I'm fending off his sly, smiling insults ("Thatmuch bass. Should we alter the bass?' until I snap, 'Leave it, just shut up.' And then I was a fun episode, wasn't it? Just fun!'), and then I find myself with two gay boys whofeel bad all night for snapping at her. She never complains. She's used to me doing that. work as researchers in Parliament, and they're gorgeous, but it turns out that they'reI always snap at the one who'll take it. Is that who I

am?
would I sleep with a Tory?

with the Shadow Secretary of Something. I'm thinking,

After the screening, we get speeches praising me. I would rather die, I swear. I
just But then they're telling me that they were 13 when Queer as Folk was on, and I
realise

wish they'd stop it. I don't recognise that person at all. That's not modesty - I
think that I'm as old as George Bernard Shaw to them. They keep talking about how
they

I'm brilliant! - but I'm not the person in those speeches. It just gets so awkward.
Do watched Queer as Folk in secret on portable TVs in their bedrooms, so essentially
we're

you clap when everyone claps you? I do, but then I feel stupid. I'm imagining
someone talking about wanking, which is weird. Then it turns out that one of them
knows the

saying, 'Look at that tosser clapping himself!' It's very hard to stop a clap once
you've exact date of my mother's death, which is completely out of leftfield and the last
thing

started. Then it's the Q&A. I hate the Q&A. I hate any Q&A. I'm 44 and balding
and that I want to think about. I've spent six years trying not to think too much
about that,

putting on weight, in a cheap suit because nothing else was clean and my alarm
didn't I move on. But then someone else appears and he's all "Why don't I ever see
you?

go off; the last thing I want to do is sit in front of 500 people. I feel so self-
conscious. Why won't you have a cigarette with me? You have a cigarette with everyone
else. Why

But no one's asking Russell Tovey, Gray O'Brien or Clive Rowe any questions, and
I not me? I'm thinking, oh shut up! And then more bloody MPs, and there's the
nice

feel responsible for them. Also, I'm trying to stop myself being 'funny', because I
can man from The Guardian, all smiles and hellos, the same man who wrote a
Guardian

put on 'funny' in front of a crowd, as a mechanism, but that default usually
means blog last week describing Doctor Who as the Most Overrated TV Show of
the Year, but

swearing or being filthy, and there are kids in the audience, so I'm all constrained.
At I'm smiling back, because they can write what they like. And it goes on and on and
the same time, I'm scanning the audience for that journalist with a killer question -
on. When I say I hate it, I'm really so unhappy - and smiling like an idiot. A hundred
like the man from The Times at the Rise of the Cybermen press screening, who

implied versions of me, and every single one sounds like a fool.

that the Doctor Who crew had been paid off by Motorola because a mobile phone Then it ends. Back to the hotel. So wound up. I don't get to sleep for hours. I just

logo was visible! He actually, literally, accused that brilliant crew of being corrupt, there, watching skiing and late-night poker on TV. Starving. I have a Coke and a

of accepting back-handers. And it escalated. The day after that, The Times phoned Bounty from the mini bar. I worry about the price. On my wage, I worry about the

Motorola and other mobile companies asking if they had illegal deals with the Doctor price of a Bounty! And I sit there replaying everything I said to everyone, and all the

Who crew, while we had to send the episode back to The Mill for all accidentally seen people I missed, and all the stupid jokes I made, and I hate it. I hate myself. I just don't

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 TEN: HOLDING THE LINE

like myself very much. Well, who ever does? But when that self has been such a public called Karim recognised us and asked for a photo, and Steven said, 'You'll never knowself, all night, I feel prostituted, exaggerated, indistinct and stupid. how historic this moment is!' But it was lovely. No great emotions. Well, I had a good

Still, the next morning is funny. I wake up, still sour. The 4.11 Edit is in Soho at time and we had a good chat, but I don't usually get emotional about stuff like that.10am, so I wear my jeans and stuff, carry my suit on a hanger, go into Soho, have a Except in a good way. I like change. I love it when people move and leave and swapcoffee, buy the papers, have another coffee. After half an hour, I realise that my hanger around. It felt good, healthy and natural.is feeling rather light. I look. The trousers have slid off. I've lost my trousers. In Soho. I I went for our coffee, full of things to tell Steven. I was bristling with them. Buthave to retrace my route through the cafes and newsagents, asking, 'Have you seen my as soon as we sat down, I thought very clearly: I don't need to tell him any of thistrousers?' I never find them. Some tramp is looking smart for Christmas! But when I stuff. He knows scripts, he knows writers, he knows what's what. And he knowsget to the Edit, I tell Phil, Julie, Graeme and Susie this story - and they laugh so hard, what he wants to do. He'll invent his own way of doing things. Experience - it'sfor so long, that I realise: this is why I love this job. These people. And whoever I am, useless! Mostly we talked about the rewriting process, though it's a hard thing toif these people are my mates, then I can't be doing too bad. discuss. As I talked, I thought I sounded power-mad. Genuinely. So I clammed

up
 about it after a while. I didn't like the sound of myself. If anything, I felt aFROM: BENJAMIN COOK
 TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER 2007 11:11:38 GMT good old fanboy thrill
 down my spine, because Steven talked about the future inRE: ARSE, ARSE,
 ARSE!
 terms of ... well,
 to the extent that I said, 'Don't tell me any more!' I want to findI'm still laughing at your
 missing trousers! But I'm surprised that you're so worried out as a viewer. I was
 even surprised, because I was half-expecting there to be aabout how you came across at the
 launch. I can understand you not enjoying it, and No Old Monsters rule under
 The Moff. But no. So that felt good.thank you for such honesty, Russell, but you're fantastic at
 dealing with the press, at I love this show, completely, and yet I will leave it
 without blinking. I've alwaysputting on that public face.. At least, you looked as though you
 knew what you were been like that. I suppose I care about myself more than I
 care about any TV show.doing - how far to push it, and when, and with whom. You were
 asked who, living or What I mean is... a funny thing happened that day. As
 Steven and I left Soho, wedead, you'd like to see play the Doctor, and you answered 'Hitler' -
 and got away with bumped into an ex of mine, Gareth. Lovely man, so we had a
 nice chat. As I wanderedit! Confident. Funny. Impassioned. It's sort of a shame that

you don't think so.
then I found myself saying,

off with Steven, I explained that Gareth was my ex, and

he's my only ex. I've only ever had two boyfriends, and he was one of them.'FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER 2007 12:13:44 GMT

I'd never
consciously thought that before, never mind said it out loud. I'm 44, andRE: ARSE, ARSE,
ARSE!

I've only had two
proper relationships. Is that weird? I mean, I knew that to be theThank you. That cheered me
up. I suppose what I'm saying is summed up in your case, obviously, and yet
I'd never really looked at the facts before so simply and easily.phrase 'putting on that public
face', because that's not a natural thing to do. I do know Two boyfriends! Just two!
Steven must have thought I was really odd - not for onlyI'm good at it, but then that becomes
a pressure in itself. People are expecting me to be having two boyfriends, but for the
way that I said it, because I was spelling it out, ingood. You can sort of see why famous
people go mad. I get one zillionth of that fame words, carefully and slowly, for my
own benefit. So really, for me, that - and losinglark. Imagine being really famous, and famous
for your face, your looks, your voice, my trousers - was what the last couple of
days was all about. Not Doctor Who.famous for just being you. That's why the likes of Britney
Spears and Amy Winehouse

go berserk. I think it's one long cry of 'Who am I?'

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER 15:35:34 GMT

RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!

I meant to ask, did you finally meet up with Steven Moffat yesterday, in London, for
that coffee? (Nice coffee, was it? Milk? Sugar?)

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER 16:44:19 GMT

RE: ARSE, ARSE, ARSE!

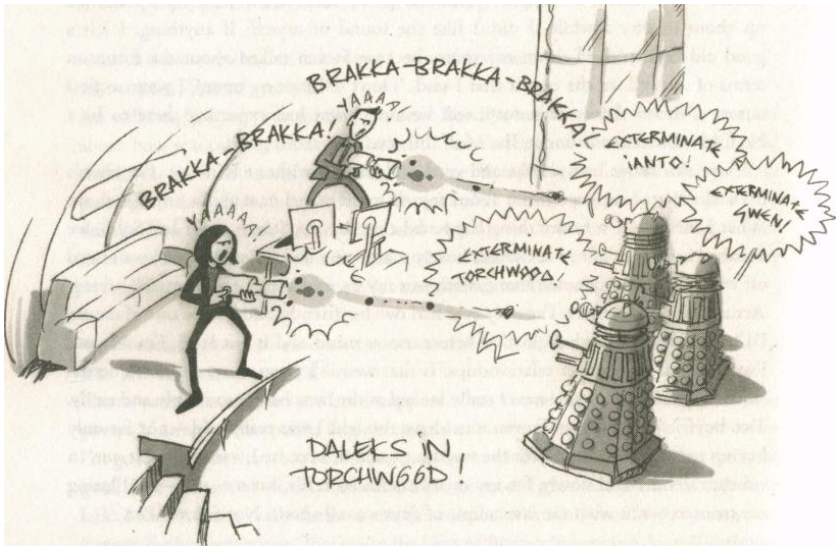
It was a latte. Freezing, because I wanted to sit outside and smoke. Poor Steven. A kid

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In which Russell hits rock bottom,
the Daleks learn German, and
Young Davros has a scream on Skaro

Look, more script! Not enough, though. But also too much, because I'm on Page 32



I'm keeping for a bit later.

Hey, guess what else? We've cast Alex Kingston as River Song in Steven's two-parter!

ALEX KINGSTON! I bloody love her. Alex Kingston is the Doctor's wife! And Dr

Moon is Colin Salmon. Classy cast.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 22 DECEMBER 2007 03:04:00 GMT

RE: THE ABOMINATION IS INSANE

I got rid of that whole Dalek descent on Westminster (Scenes 31-40). It's the Daleks

- why are they so diplomatic? When I read that back to myself on Thursday night,

having been away from the script for three days, I found my eyes skipping over those

scenes, and I woke up this morning and thought, get rid of them. I needed to lose

some pages anyway. You have to go down those blind alleys sometimes.

I'm not very fond of the Shadow Proclamation. The Chief Constable is the most

@yuliasha

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES

thankless part ever.1 She has to say terrible sci-fi lines like 'Perhaps if we scan for mean about 'My vision is impaired' - it's a proper Dalek catchphrase, isn't it? - but,Zygm Energy' and 'The Tandocca Scale...' Some poor actor! Giving her detail, flesh while he's saying that, Wilf and Sylvia would run away. It's already slightly dodgy thatand interest would just rack up the page count, so she's terribly stripped down. I keep they just stand there.wondering if I should cut the Shadow Proclamation completely, but without it... God knows about Penelope Wilton. Julie and Phil have been nagging me to pay offwell, the Doctor would sit in the TARDIS, scanning things, until, yes, he finds the Harriet's ending in The Christmas Invasion since... well, since The Christmas Invasion.Earth. It would be strangely domestic. No struggle, no journey, no obstacles. He has (What a great episode title that was!) She's very hard to book, because she's so into have a journey. Should the Shadow Proclamation be replaced with something more demand. We only got her on Bob & Rose by the skin of our teeth. Imagine if we hadn't!mystic, like a trip to a barren world to consult some psychic hermit? But that's equally That's why she's limited in this script to one location, one day's work. Easier to book.bollocks. I hate that sort of spooky crap. Also, I can feel the start of a cold. I cannot Julie has been expecting it, but I doubt she's laid any groundwork, because she can'thave a cold. I just can't. I won't. until a script is in. We can't do anything until after Christmas now, but oh, fingers

If not, I'm afraid it'll have to be Mr Copper from Voyage of the Damned. ThatFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 23 DECEMBER 2007 02:40:20

GMT would work. But I hope it's Harriet.RE: THE ABOMINATION IS INSANE

I went back and fixed the Chief Constable. Her main problem was being a Chief FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SUNDAY 23 DECEMBER 2007 11:40:13 GMT

Constable, so I decided - and it's funny how that e-mail to you yesterday clarified my RE: THE ABOMINATION IS INSANEworries - that since she has to say lame sci-fi lines, she can only work if she's a sci-fi Ah! Got it! The Dalek says 'My vision is not impaired!' Good joke. Fanboy joke.creature. I've renamed her the Shadow Architect, made her albino and weird (hair

scraped into a black snood, red eyes, solemn, swathed in black robes), and given her a FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 24 DECEMBER 2007 03:24:43 GMT

slight mysticism - not hermit-in-a-cave mysticism, just an albino freakiness - so that RE: THE ABOMINATION IS INSANEshe's sort of

interesting now. Not fascinating, just interesting. I didn't finish. Damn and crap and bollocks! I don't think I've got time tomorrow.

haven't bought a single card or present yet, and I have to go to Swansea tomorrowFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 23 DECEMBER 2007 07:30:09 GMT

night. Christmas with my blind dad. I sit and describe to him what's happening onRE: **THE ABOMINATION IS INSANE**

TV.

'The Host have hooked arms with the Doctor, and they're flying him up, up, up'Have you got a

webcam?'

the ship...' I have a laugh doing that. I make things up. 'They're on fire!'

'She wouldn't let me. She says they're naughty.' There's no budget when you're blind.

Ha ha ha ha ha! And three cheers for Bernard's paint gun. But surely, before repairing itself, I won't be back online until Friday now. Days off! Maybe a break will do me good.the Dalek should say, 'MY VISION IS IMPAIRED! I CANNOT SEE!'...? Isn't that kind of Although, I'll just be thinking about the script. It's Christmas Eve, and I'm dying to getobligatory? to work already.

Has Penelope Wilton signed up already?2 Or do negotiations start now?

message from: RussellFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 23 DECEMBER 2007 10:32:01 GMT Sent: 25-Dec-200712:28RE: **THE**

ABOMINATION IS INSANE

Xmas, Benjamino! Shame there's nothing good on TV tonight...I'm glad you like the webcam joke. I love putting gags in the middle of The End Of

The World, although that gag works because Wilf isn't being funny; he really means

Text message from: Benit. At the launch on Tuesday, as he was leaving, Bernard said, Are we doing that paint

Sent: 25-Dec-200715:24gun thing?' I said yes, and he was astonished. He was like, 'Really?!' What a

lovely

Oh, I don't know, I'm counting down the minutes till To the Manor Born! Ha!man. So no matter how many pages I'm over, I'm not cutting that. I know what you

put on a stone by

Merry Xmas to you and yours. I'm stuffed already. I'll have

time Voyage of the Damned is on.1 The tough, efficient 'Chief Constable' (renamed the Shadow Architect in subsequent drafts) is the head of the Shadow

Proclamation.

2 In Doctor Who 1.4/1.5, Penelope Wilton played Harriet Jones MP, who returned in 2.X as the UK's Prime Minister, before the

Doctor deposed her.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES

Text message from: Russell
Ben
message from: Russell
Sent: 25-Dec-2007
20:10
26-Dec-2007 12:42
Sent:

Watching Doctor Who with the family is so stressful. But it went down well.
Oh yes, it does. Mind you, it's swiftly followed by the terrifying thought:

YEAR! But sod that for now. You've got to take time to enjoy it,
Text message from: Russell
Sent: 25-Dec-2007
20:13
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 27 DECEMBER 2007 23:44:10 GMT

Various members of my family are now bleeding and wounded because
12.2 MILLION!!!

they TALKED!!! For the love of Clom! The punishments will continue
all * I'm back in Cardiff. I wasn't supposed to be back until tomorrow, but there's too much

night. Still, I might be biased, but I loved that Special. It worked well with
work to do, so I made my farewells. All is quiet and still in Cardiff Bay. Lovely.

the kids here too -just as it
should. I can't face opening 4.12. It feels like
something that I wrote aeons ago. I've cancelled

going
to Billie's wedding next week. That's the last thing I need right now. Shame, but

Text message from: Russell
Ben
The script is more important. And that much-threatened cold is it had to be done.

Sent: 26-Dec-2007
09:56
now descending
over me fast. I'm snivelling away and starting to cough. Noooooo to the

So what do you make of the viewing figures? An overnight estimate of
12.2 cough! The cough took me out for five weeks last year.

MILLION! OH MY GOD! Many Congrats.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 30 DECEMBER 2007 02:28:05 GMT

Text message from:
Russell RE: 12.2 MILLION!!!

Sent: 26-Dec-2007

10:08 Here's more... but it's absolute
bollocks. I wanted to finish tonight, but I haven't. I

F*****G HELL!!! I'm phoning Phil, Julie's phoning me, we're all going
mental! failed. This cold is getting worse. My eyes are streaming and I can't see the
sodding

keyboard

Plus, this is now way, way, way too long. Seriously, I need another ten pages.

Text message from:
Russell I'm writing stuff that I know I'm
going to cut. There are a couple of pages of lovely

Sent: 26-Dec-2007

11:31 dialogue where finally the
Doctor and Donna link up, over the scanner, with Jack,

Twelve point two!!! I just thought I'd spell it out in words to see how good
it Martha and Sarah Jane, and Donna meets them all... but it's all going to be cut, I can
looks. I'm still laughing. I can't get over those figures. I am
reeling. tell. That's pissed me off. Dialogue that I've been dying to write, and now
I've written

Everyone is so
happy. it with a faint heart, because
it's cuttable. What a waste of time and energy.

Tonigh

this feels like a space-opera runaround. I don't like it much. It's too big, it's

Text message from:
Ben daft, the Doctor
arrives too late and does nothing all episode. It's lame shit. It feels like

Sent: 26-Dec-2007

11:38 we're going to
spend millions of licence-fee-payers' money on silly rubbish. That's not

And to think, just a week ago, you were walking around Soho with
no the right mood to write in. And now tomorrow is buggered,
because my boyfriend is

trousers. That's some comeback,
Russell. coming to Cardiff for the New
Year, but I must keep writing. I promised him that I

wouldn't

work over the next few days. Even though he has the patience of a saint, he's

Text

message

from:

Russell

going to kill me. It's all going to

get tense, and that's no mood to write in either.

Sent: 26-Dec-2007 11:45

I hope my lucky trousers played some part in our ratings victory.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 30
DECEMBER 2007 20:06:21 GMT

RE:

12.2 MILLION!!!

Text

message

from:

Ben

Sorry about last

night's outpouring. I lost control of it. I woke up this morning, telling

Sent:

26-Dec-2007

11:51

myself the thing

that I have to tell myself a million times: I'm in control of it, it's not

The final, consolidated figure will be closer to 13 million, surely?
That's in control of me. I'm in a better mood now. I should finish tonight,
but this cold is

incredible. It must make all the stressing
worthwhile? streeeeeeaming...

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES			

FROM:	RUSSELL	T	DAVIES	TO:	BENJAMIN	COOK.	MONDAY	31	DECEMBER	2007	04:35:22
GMT	Well, a rest should do you good. It'll give you a chance to										
shake	off		the	cold.	At		least		itRE: 12.2		

MILLION!!!
take you five-and-half hours to get home tonight! Pity me. Happy New Year,FINISHED! I finished at about lam, but it was 63 pages long, so I've been sitting here Russell.since then, whittling it down to 58. But it's still too long; it should be around 54. It's

hard to tell with action scripts. When the FX budget is over - way over! - that'll help

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 31 DECEMBER 2007
14:16:27 GMT

me prune back even more. What a cliffhanger!3 And now I'm going to go and have
a **RE: 12.2 MILLION!!!!cold.**
Properly.
New Year to you, Benjamins! Seriously, my favourite thing about this year?

correspondence. I have loved it. It's been something new. New is good. I'm so gladFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 31 DECEMBER 2007 13:07:59 GMT that you thought of doing this. Thank you. Get home safe. Subwave Network closingRE: 12.2

MILLION!!!
Good night.For once, just for once, could 4.12 not finish with a 'Next Time' trailer? Put a TO BE CONTINUED' graphic or something - anything! - but it'd spoil that amazing
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 5
JANUARY 2008 18:25:27 GMT

cliffhanger if we see the Doctor up and about in the trailer. Is the plan to convince **HAPPY NEW YEAR?**people that this is David's swansong as the Doctor? This is all very exciting. How are I'm starting to feel human again. I've spent half of the last week in bed. It's only a cold,you feeling about it? but being a smoker makes it vicious. Yes, it's all my own fault. And I'm dying for a

now!FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 31 DECEMBER 2007 13:57:38
GMT The prep date for 4.12/4.13 is Monday, but they'll
only have 4.12. There's plenty ofRE: 12.2

MILLION!!!
in that to be getting on with. Actually, I still haven't officially submitted 4.12; You're right, actually. A black, silent 'TO BE CONTINUED' card would be amazing.
only you and Julie have read it so far. I keep meaning to go over it again, to reduce There are bound to be TV trailers that week, but you could just show lots of Daleks and the page count, but then I sit here and cough, and want a cigarette, and fail to do a repeat of 'I'm regenerating...' We never send out preview

discs of the last episode, so anything. I'll give it the weekend. And I'll start 4.13. Any day now. Late already. Ohwe might just get away with it. What a laugh! I feel happy now. Very. I think the script God.has lived up to the concept's promise. New Year? They sold us a pup. It's the Old Year, with a bit of nail varnish.

Julie got back from New York this morning, sat down in the Virgin lounge to read it, but then Phil arrived to pick her up. She texted me: 'He's on time! He's never on time!'
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 5 JANUARY 2008 19:29:50 GMT

I'm only on Page 30!' She's left in high suspense, but now she's got Billies wedding
RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?all day and won't be able to read it till tonight. But I never send scripts to Phil at the I've just realised, you sent me that first e-mail on 18 February... and that's now mysame time as Julie. Maybe I should, but the whole thing is a headache to him - it's a exact deadline for 4.14. It's a year! Blimey. A year of sitting in this bloody chair. I'mterrifying budget sheet - so I leave him in peace. For now. depressed now.

Of course, stopping has meant that this cold is sweeping over me. My hands are swollen. That's not good. What does diat mean? Hey, what are you doing tonight?
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 5 JANUARY 2008 20:38:30 GMT

Dancing in fountains? I'm so sick and bleeargghhh, I'm just going to sit in front of the
RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?TV with my old fella and herald in the New Year from my armchair. That's just the cold talking. Trust me, you've loved every minute of it! Ha ha.

never think of it as work, really, no matter how much hard graft I actually do.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 31 DECEMBER 2007 14:09:05 GMT
Even if no one ever saw this stuff, I'd be doing it anyway.«

RE: 12.2
MILLION!!!
now a good time to quote the above back at you?

I'm out in Covent Garden tonight, and then on to Trafalgar Square - or maybe the Victoria Embankment to watch the fireworks.

3 The Doctor is shot by a Dalek, and carried to the TARDIS by Donna. Rose and Captain Jack, where he starts to 4
The Subwave Network - created by the Mr Copper Foundation, and further developed by Harriet Jones - is a piece of regenerate...
software, in Doctor Who 4.12, programmed to seek out anyone and everyone who can help to contact the Doctor.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 5 JANUARY 2008 20:45:23 GMT

RE: HAPPY NEW
YEAR? working. The
problem is, there's no consolation in the above. I've only really thoughtHa ha
ha. about this
when you posed the question.

No. But
it's more than that... this is where it becomes a difficult question, in that it starts

to
define me, because I let myself down in a million other areas. I let myself down inFROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 9 JANUARY 20 08 22:51:15 GMT my

relationship with my father, in not phoning my sisters from one year to the next,RE: HAPPY
NEW YEAR? in not giving
my boyfriend enough time. When I do give him time, I mess that up too.I bumped into
Freema in the Bay today. Big hug, hello, then I walked back to my flat, I let myself
down personally by smoking badly, eating badly, living badly. Do you see?thinking about
Martha in 4.13. I closed the door, and then I actually, really, said out *That's where I*
let myself down. The real stuff. All the time. Is that because I work soloud to
myself, all alone, 'You cannot let her down.' I really did that. Sometimes I say hard? Or
do I work so hard to absolve myself from blame? This is where work and lifescary
motivational things to myself out loud. Like it helps! It doesn't. are simply
indivisible. Ah, but that's what writing is. Looking at yourself all day, every

The good news is, Harriet Jones is back! Penelope Wilton says yes! Apparently,
she day. Whether I'm thinking about monsters, gay men, religion, comedy... it's all
me, insaid yes straight away, no doubt, no hesitation, bang, done. Brilliant! I wasn't
expecting the end. With no answers and no clarity. Just more questions.it to be that easy.
So that's a thrill. She'll face the Daleks!

message from: RussellFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 9 JANUARY 2008 23:04:17
GMT Sent: 11-Jan-2008 13:57

RE: HAPPY NEW
YEAR? Final
viewing figures for Voyage of the Damned: 13.3 million!!!

»You cannot let her down.'«

message from: Ben Text

But why do you never talk about letting yourself down? Doesn't that worry you as

11-Jan-2008 14:04much? Sent:

That's

immense! Well done all. Hey, I'm texting you from a tunnel in Barry

Island,

on location for The Doctor's Daughter. I'm huddled in a corner, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
THURSDAY 10 JANUARY 2008 16:46:53 GMT

drinking

soup. David texted me yesterday: 'It's not cold, actually - we're **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**

underground.

It does smell like a wino's breath, though. I've been thinking about your question a lot. It struck a chord.
It's partly because

letting down Freema or Catherine or David or the production team does mean letting

message from: Russell myself down. If we end up with a rubbish series finale, I'll be gutted. My
God, I'll be

11-Jan-2008 18:28 suicidal. 'They' and 'me' exist simultaneously in that equation. They work for
me, with

sat here doing no work. I'm scared now. Proper scared. me, because of me.

At the same time, the question went deep, because... well, this is kind of hard to say,

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 12 JANUARY 2008 03:14:22 GMT but I never have, in my
work, let myself down. Not ever. Not really. Not profoundly.

Is that an outrageous thing to say? But that's why I'm successful. I'm good at what
I **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?** do. I work exceptionally hard. That doesn't mean
everything that I've done has been It's only two pages. Don't get excited. An easy
two pages. I always knew how to get outbrilliant or that every script that I've written has
been good, but actually every piece of those cliffhangers. I only did this tonight so that I
don't wake up tomorrow in blind of work has been done with good intent, to the best of my
abilities, within the limits misery without even a file that says '4.13'... of my own talent
and stamina. Every Single Thing. Even some bloody awful Granada

sitcoms that I was coerced into, where I ended up using a pen-name. Rotten
scripts, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 13 JANUARY 2008 01:43:22 GMT

rotten to the core... but I couldn't have made them better, at the time. I gave
them **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?** everything. For all their awfulness, I still have a

strange pride in them. I put everything Steven Moffat e-mailed me earlier and said, almost
in passing... into work. Everything. It's not always enough, and hindsight shows me a
thousand *Another thing: I've started. I've written the first few pages*

of my first episode. Couldn't different ways that I should have done things, but that's
natural; I don't beat myself up *stop myself. It was like incontinence. Well,*
hopefully not completely like incontinence. over that. Or maybe I'm blind to the proper
disasters. Maybe you have to be, to keep *But anyway.*

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that room with them? I'd always imagined that it'd be Donna. I've a brilliant Donna-

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 14 JANUARY 2008 15:21:50 GMT

showing-compassion-for-Davros scene in mind. Plus, this is Donna's series; putting **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**the Doctor with Rose weights the whole drama too heavily in her favour. And in some I did no work last night. I went to bed. Set the alarm on my mobile, as usual. Placed ways - which become important later on - Donna should have been in this room for a my mobile far away from the bed, as usual. But then got a sheet of A4 and wrote onwhile. Simultaneously, the plot is demanding that Donna is in the TARDIS, touching it in big, black Magic Marker: 'WORK, YOU STUPID ****!' That did the trick. I've the hand-in-a-jar, so she becomes the biological catalyst for Doctor #2 to be grown been working since 1 lam...out of the original Doctor's hand. That's why Doctor #2 is half-human, because he's

part-Donna, which gives him one heart. This means that when he goes to live in the

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 14 JANUARY 2008 18:05:36 GMTparallel universe, with Rose, at the end, he's going to age at a normal rate, so they'll be **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**a proper couple. None of that 'You'll wither and die while I stay the same' lark. It's the GERMAN DALEKS!!!5 They've always been German, really, haven't they?final solution to their biggest problem as a couple. Donna has to be in the TARDIS as

Doctor #2 appears. So she spends most of the episode with him, right?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 14 JANUARY 2008 18:53:18 GMT

But hold on - look at your other options - because if Rose is going to spend the rest **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**of her life with Doctor f 2, shouldn't she be with him in the TARDIS as he springs into I've gone one better now: I Babel Fish-ed some dialogue for them, so now they'reexistence - and they spend the rest of the episode together, riffing off each other, both saying:6liking each other. And Doctor #2 is half-human, remember, so he can be more overtly DALEKSsexualised than the original. Do you see how neat that is? If I dont take that option, Halt! Oder Sie werden geabschaffen! Sie sind ein

des Daleks!she'll have to meet Doctor #2 in the last ten minutes. Pretty quick to fall in love. So,

right, take that option - but that requires Donna to bond with the hand-in-a-jar, then 5 Martha teleports to Germany, 50 miles outside Bremmen, where she encounters Daleks speaking German CExterminaten!').

Fish is a web-based application that translates text from one of several languages into another.

Gefang

6 Babel

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES			

Even then, I had a proper little conversation with myself about how Daleks would

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 15 JANUARY 2008 13:40:41 GMT

communicate in foreign countries - and how we, as the audience, would hear it. This

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR? tapped into another ponder, namely how much of the TARDIS translation facility

Julie has more or less told me to do what I want. Although, unusually for Julie, who Martha would have kept with her once she stops being a proper companion. Not much,

always says 'write what you want', she did add, A bit more for Jackie would be great, I decided, or there would be all these polylingual ex-companions all over the place. That though,' so I think that's a hint. I'm tempted to see what a Sarah/Mickey/Jackie combo ability has to fade. Martha would hear German, so we should hear German. Daleks

would be like, so I might try it out this afternoon. I do love Jackie. But in the end: story don't talk in standard English anyway, and would adapt to each country or planet. And

wins. In the past, we've booked actors and then paid them off in order to get rid of yes, German, how apt for a bunch of Nazis.

them. A producer - a bad producer - will always say, 'But we've contracted them! We're

paying

them!' And I always reply, 'Yes, but we're paying them anyway, so it doesn't

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 15 JANUARY 2008 03:11:59 GMT

matter

if they're in it or not.' Plus, you do spend less on them if you don't use them, on

overnights

and per diems. So there.

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?

I'm terrified that there's no room for Jackie. I think we've asked Camille Coduri to

I don't think I need to worry about a reason for Mickey needing Jackie. That would keep the whole filming block of four weeks free, but now she's only going to be needed

start to get convoluted. I'm already having to shoehorn in lines about Dimension

Jumps

needing another half-hour to recharge and awful caveats like that, to stop the for one day at the end, when we return to Bad Wolf Bay. That's been worrying me all

cast

teleporting all over the place. Instead, I think it's very Jackie to just turn up. Like night. I e-mailed Julie about an hour ago, to ask where we stand with Camille and her

a nag.

'I'm not staying behind! Where's my daughter?!' There, motivation in one line, agent. Not that Camille would complain, of course, but we're talking a living wage

accurate

character work and a bit of a laugh. here. It's not fair. I did wonder, in my Julie e-mail, if Jackie could team up with Mickey

and Sarah Jane (poor Julie hasn't even read 4.13 and won't know what I'm on about),

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 15 JANUARY 2008 14:53: 03 GMTbut I regarded that as a desperate, last-minute option. Funny thing is, as the thought

RE:

HAPPY NEW YEAR?settles in, I realise that it could be rather good. It spoils the clean dynamic of the two

I was

on Page 19 and set myself a target: if I could add Jackie and make trims here and thereSmiths together, but Jackie always comes up with good dialogue, and the thought of

so that

the end result is still 19 pages, then she could stay. And I have. So she is. Hooray!her and Sarah Jane is a bit tempting.

But would Jackie's early arrival bump up the length of the script? Also, I really worry

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 17 JANUARY 2008 02:41:51 GMTthat since Jackie has given birth and has little Tony at home (Tony Tyler!), she'd never

RE:

HAPPY NEW YEAR?enter a bloody battle zone. She'd stay at home. So I don't know what's best for the story,

The

Doctor meeting Davros! Davros is hard to write. It's so easy to find yourself startingand I don't know what's good manners professionally.

every

line with 'So, Doctor...' and all that crap.FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 15 JANUARY 2008 13:16:44 GMT

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 17 J ANUARY 2008 20:52:24 GMT**RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**

»I e-mailed Julie about an hour ago, to ask where we stand with Camille and her **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?** agent.« I've

just watched the first episode of Series Two of Skins. Radio Times biked it over to me.

And what has Julie said? What will decide: the story or the desire to give Camille a I'm interviewing Bryan Elsley for them next week. Oh, Russell... it's much better thanfair crack of the whip? Series One. I'm ridiculously happy about that. I can't wait for you to see this second series

»I really worry that since Jackie's given birth and has little Tony at home (Tony when it airs on E4 next month. Also, it seems that the blond gay one, Maxxie (playedTyler!), she'd never enter a bloody battle zone.« by Mitch Hewer), is the lead for the first half of the series, so you've got to watch. You're

You could say the same of Sarah Jane, though. She has Luke waiting for her back Number One Gay!home. If the world is about to end, I suppose you do whatever necessary to save that

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 17 JANUARY 2008 21:04:03 GMTworld and the people in it that you care about most.

RE:

HAPPY NEW YEAR?

Good

for Skins'. I mean that. I will watch, because I feel quite attached to that show, if only

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES

because we talked about Series One so much. (And did I mention Tony in his pants?)
Isn't DAVROS

It
begins! Finally, we will achieve all that I have everTony all crippled and sick in Series Two?
That's one way to reinvent a character. You can wanted. Peace. Everlasting
peace.tell that Beautiful Maxxie is the new lead by the way that he dances half-naked through

DOCTORthe trailer. And into my arms. Oh, they know their trailers, those Skins
boys. They'll kill you, Davros. Once it's done. Cos the

I fell asleep this afternoon. Bad move. I only woke up 20 minutes ago. Still a
bit Daleks despise you, for being flesh. Ohh, you will be

extermi
I spent today rearranging things (I've got Jackie and Mickey arriving at the
same time now, in the same FX shot -- of course, duh, how stupid was I?) and
seeding DAVROSinformation in the right place. I
realised that Rose spent time in 4.11 telling Donna As I said, Doctor. Peace.

that she was super-important for reasons beyond 4.11's plot, but now she forgets
to Silence, as Davros glides away from them. Hold.mention it to her, so I fixed
things like that. Also, I realised that the Doctor is happily

Only
the noise of huge hydraulics from above. The Doctorpointing to his hand-in-a-jar at the
beginning, with Rose just standing there. Rose looking up, trapped,
helpless.should be like, 'What?! Your hand what?!
1 But Rose is looking at Davros. She's quiet,
sad:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 17 JANUARY 2008 23:50:31
GMT What happened to you? I mean your face. Your eyes. What

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?

I am writing. Jackie Tyler is about to die. I love Jackie about to
die! DAVROS

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 18 JANUARY 2008 00:10:09 GMT

Are
you showing me pity, Miss Tyler?

RE: HAPPY NEW
YEAR?
can't kill Jackie Tyler! She has a son now!

must have. Once upon a time.

Kill him instead.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 18 JANUARY 2008 02:59:55 GMT (quiet)

Not

for so many years. But I was like you, back then.**RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**

Walking tall, so young and so proud. On a world called I've started to write rubbish now. Always a sign. A sign saying: 'STOP'. I really wanted Skaro. A world at war.to write more, which means that I won't finish tomorrow after all, and then I have to ROSEgo to Hull this weekend. With who...?

You wouldn't believe the stuff that I'm cutting as I go along. Stuff that I'd planned in my

but then, no, too expensive or too long or just rubbish, so I never write a word of it. With each other. My race, the Kaleds, in perpetualEven though it was alive and possible until... ooh, yesterday. Like, Doctor #2 and Donna battle against the Thais. My very first memory; hiding

undergrou

with the screams of battle above. I saw thewere going to go back to the Shadow Proclamation and enlist a fleet of Judoon ships! And surface of the planet, only once...attack the Medusa Cascade! Blimey! Madness, I know. It would have been good, though.

On

CU Davros...Roughly ten FX shots of Judoon ships flying and attacking Dalek saucers, etc.

TO:FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 19 JANUARY 2008 03:24:20 GMT

61.

EXT. SKARO - DAY**RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**

FX:

CU DAVROS, the MAN. Gaunt, strong, in a dirty-white

60. INT. CRUCIBLE VAULTS -

NIGHT medic's coat. FX for the BOILING RED SKY behind him...

THE DOCTOR & ROSE still in SPOTLIGHTS; looking up, hearing the FX: REVERSE. DAVROS a small figure on a VAST PLAIN. DMP of a

sound of MASSIVE HYDRAULICS. DAVROS calmer, now: RUINED WORLD. A shattered domed city; weird, warped cliffs in

distance. NUCLEAR CLOUDS in the sky.

TO:

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WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

DOCTOR



ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES

VAULTS - NIGHT

myself. Perhaps it was necessary. To

DOCTOR

weren't helping those soldiers. You were
them. You even experimented on your own
the evolution of the Kaled Race, until
Daleks.

(giggling) We were born!

64. INT. CRUCIBLE

...I became victim
inspire me.

THE

...except you
experimenting on
family. Twisting
they became the

DALEK CAAN

Out of blood!

DAV

(still

at Rose)

Can you imagine?

I had one idea! An idea that has never

stopped. Rolling

out across the centuries. I have slept,

and woken, and

died, and every time I open my eyes, there

they are. My

Daleks. Outlasting eternity. And all from

one man!

62. INT. CRUCIBLE VAULTS - NIGHT

DOCTOR

DAVROS

And I swore, then. To end it. I pledged my life, to help
time you open your eyes, Davros... There's me.

Oh, but every

my people, to ensure their survival.

Text

message from: Russell

CUT TO:

Sent: 19-

Jan-2008 19:32

63.

INT.

HOSPITAL

HARD

-

DAY

Jane Tranter has just agreed to make

4.13 a 60-minute Special!

These images are now cranked up, wild & jittery, only

glimpsed. It's like a WORLD WAR I WARD. But WINDOWLESS,

Text message from:

Ben

underground. INJURED SOLDIERS, bandaged, WOMEN in simple

Sent:

19-Feb-2008 20:15

nurses' uniforms, running, panicking.

No need to worry

so much about page count. Good news.

JUMP CUTS of DAVROS the MAN, going from bed to bed. Studying

one SOLDIER, opening his eyelid, shining a torch; preparing a

FROM: RUSSELL T

DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. MONDAY 21 JANUARY 2008 01:47:02 GMT

syringe; injecting the soldier. The soldier thrashing in

RE: HAPPY NEW

YEAR?

agony; Davros & Nurse holding him down.

what happened on Saturday... I got really worried about

Just so you know exactly

DAVROS 00V
down anything, but this was getting absurd. The clincher for me

page count. I can cut

I studied the soldiers. Their frailty. Their pain. I
simple, seemingly unimportant lines at the top of Scene 43 in

was cutting two very

sought to find a way, to free them from the agonies of

the flesh. And then...

the most recent draft.

After Davros has activated the Holding Cell, he said, 'Excellent.

Even when powerless, a

Time Lord is best contained.' And then the Doctor said,

PRAC FX: EXPLOSION, Davros silhouetted against FIRE -
'you're still scared of me.' Cuttable, yes... except they're not, because

'Good to know

Glimpsed, jagged images - nurses - screaming - running -
introduction lines to a big scene, they're a pause, a settling, a statement

those are two

dialogue. A signature that's saying, "These two are going to talk

of intent. Signature

CU Davros, his head now BALD, red, peeling; holding both hands

now.' I thought, if I'm

having to cut that, I'm in serious trouble. Let alone other stuff,

over his face, so he can't be seen. He's screaming.

like the fact that I was

now writing in such shorthand that Davros didn't have time

CUT TO: to recognise Sarah
Jane, that I didn't have time in the TARDIS for the Doctor to tell

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
ELEVEN: DAY OLD BLUES			
Captain	Jack	and	Rose
guns...		to	put
		down	their
			DAVROS

intimacy. So different from the Doctor *I once knew.*

So I forwarded the script to Julie, saying what trouble we were in, to the extent of wondering: does something massive need to be cut? Like Sarah Jane? Or Torchwood? Something intrinsic, not just line-trims. Julie read it, loved it, phoned Jane and got That's the sort of thing I mean, the sort of stuff that I was having to leave out by instant authorisation for a 60-minute Special! It's not that simple, of course - Julie now compressing into shorthand. It's at the heart of the whole thing. It'll pay off beautifully needs to find funding, and contract Graeme and all departments and the actors for at the end. Of course, this script has to be ready for the Tone Meeting on Wednesday another week - but if anyone can do it, she can. What support, though. Amazing. (it's going to be an endless meeting - we haven't even got the right amount of

practical Daleks, let alone all the ones that I'm blowing up!), and I've just upped the FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 21 JANUARY 2008 02:46:36 GMT page count, which gives me even more pages to write. Ah, something always bites RE: **HAPPY NEW YEAR?** me on the arse. That's a lot of work. I'm only tootling through that script tonight, slipping back lines that I wish I hadn't cut, such

as this exchange between the Doctor and Rose in the Crucible Vaults, just after Davros has said that he wants 'Everlasting peace'...

Silence, as Davros glides away from them. Hold.

Only the noise of huge hydraulics from above. The Doctor looking up, trapped, helpless.

Then, quiet, intimate, across the distance:

ROSE

You never did finish that sentence.

THE DOCTOR

What sentence...?

ROSE

(smiles)

Like you don't know. Last time I saw you. On Bad Wolf
Bay. You said, 'Rose Tyler...'

THE DOCTOR

...isn't it cold? Come

ROSE

on. Properly. Does

THE DOCTOR

it need saying?

ROSE

Yeah.

Pause; sad smile between them.

Then, just as quiet:

7 Graeme Harper directed 4.12/4.13.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

TIME FOR HEROES

In which Skins is the best thing on TV,
Russell gets chicken pox, and Rose Tyler
is a terrible racist... possibly

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 02:37:55 GMT

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?

I've almost finished... but I'm still a way off. I'm wondering whether to stay up and

finish it. Technically, I have to, because this is supposed to be distributed to everyone

tomorrow morning, but I don't know, I've had a weird day. I feel a bit strange, a

bit dizzy and sick, just not myself. I've been typing away, without music, in silence.

Normally, I love writing series finales. I get a real buzz. I'm not getting a buzz this time.

It's laughable to think that I ever imagined fitting all this into 45 minutes. That's not

helping. I feel stupid. I'm not sure I should continue, feeling like this, with big and

lovely scenes to come. I feel like I might spoil them.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 02:51:08 GMT



RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?

»It's laughable to think that I ever imagined fitting all this into 45 minutes. That's

not helping. I feel stupid.«

Yeah, but with the best will in the world, Russell, plenty of writers don't have enough

story in their heads to fill 30 or 45 minutes of drama,

let alone an hour. So think
yourself lucky. Or gifted. But not stupid.

@yuliasha

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FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 02:58:51 GMT
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 07:37:28 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 07:41:49 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 06:23:04 GMT
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 07:49:29 GMT

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 07:56:43 GMT

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 09:54:58 GMT

ends in Chiswick.1 That's so funny.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 06:27:58 GMT

Oh,

enough! Have it. Phew. Blub.**RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 10:03:01 GMT I just thought that. If I fell into the Bay, no one would know what happens to

RE:

Donna! I won't fall into the Bay.
HAPPY NEW YEAR?

And

now, ten minutes after pressing send, I'm remembering all the lines and moments
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 06:46:00 GMT

that I

meant to put in. Always the way.**RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 10:23:19 GMT I didn't fall into the Bay. Mmm, croissant. Still warm. I love a little shop.

RE:

HAPPY NEW YEAR? FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 06:49:16 GMT

Poor,

poor Donna. That's worse than death, isn't it? 2 I think / might cry! At least Wilf

remembers.

Donna was much better than Penny Carter would have been.**RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?**

Did you get hit by a bus, though?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008 06:54:39 GMT

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?

1

Donna Noble hails from Chiswick, in West London. Yes, I'm typing from the ambulance. They say I'll never dance again. In fairness, I've had 2 The 'biological metacrisis' that creates Doctor #2, when Donna touches the Doctor's hand-in-a-jar (following 4.13's

cliffhanger

resolution, in which the Doctor uses his severed hand as a store for unused energy from his aborted my day. regeneration), proves to be a two-way transference; Donna becomes half-human, half-Time Lord. However, as her body is still

human,

she is unable to live with a Time Lord mind - and the Doctor has to wipe Donna's memories of her time with him so

that she

doesn't 'burn up' before he can return her home to Chiswick.

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DOCTOR
TALE
TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S
CHAPTER

RISE OF
THE FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22
JANUARY 2008 10:30:07 GMT

RE: HAPPY NEW

YEAR?

CYBERMEN

I know, imagine forgetting the Doctor! Catherine is begging to make an appearance

in These are the closing scenes of
Journey's End, as written on 22

January *The Sarah Jane Adventures, because it's her daughter's*

favourite show, but I'm

*sitting*2008... here going, 'But

how?!

143. EXT. NOBLES' HOUSE -

NIGHT

FROM: RUSSELL
T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN
COOK, TUESDAY 22 JANUARY
2008 23:03:08 GMT

The Tardis noise now fading away. And all alone in
the RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?

doorway, in the rain... I slept all
afternoon. Fresh as the proverbial. People seem happy with the script, though

Phil was seen to be
weeping. Not at the sad ending; at the budget!

WILF salutes,

WIDE SHOT. The Tardis has gone. Only the rain.

And FROM: BENJAMIN COOK
TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES,
TUESDAY 22 JANUARY 2008
23:29:31 GMT

Wilfred Mott gently closes the door.

RE: HAPPY NEW
YEAR?

CUT TO:

You cried when writing
Donna's goodbye, even though you knew what was coming,

144. INT. TARDIS - NIGHT and
now Phil is in tears... aren't you worried that it might be too sad for some viewers,
especially the younger
ones?

WIDE SHOT. In flight.

Also, if this isn't an
odd question, why have you written that final scene with

THE DOCTOR, all alone. He's a bit bedraggled, from
the the Cybermen? What exactly do you think it adds to the plot? Isn't it a bit...

rain. Looks up at the Time
Rotor. superfluous?

Lost in thought.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK,
WEDNESDAY 23 JANUARY
2008 00:04:57 GMT

Deep breath. Move on. He starts wandering round.

Flicking switches. Recovering
himself. RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR?

The final scene? Well,
same reason as ever, really. Like the runaway bride appearing in

Nice and slow, taking his time. All the time in the

the TARDIS at the end
of Doomsday, like the Titanic crashing into the TARDIS at the
world.

end of Last of the Time
Lords, to end on an upbeat note. To say that the story isn't over,

Then, eventually, there's a small bleep from
the don't stop watching Doctor Who, ever. The Doctor's life never stops, no
matter how sad

scanner. He wanders over. Only half interested.

Studies it. things get. Dry
your tears, move on. New adventures to come. Otherwise, you might

remember Doctor Who
as a sad and bleak thing, which is maybe not so good if you're

Then more curious...

eight years old.

THE DOCTOR But am I
worried that some viewers might find Donna's departure too sad? Not

What...? remotely. Not for a
single second. I believe, hugely, massively, that TV isn't there to

(looks closer)

make you smile. Drama
certainly isn't. That ending is devastating. I hope it's never

What?

(closer) forgotten. I hope
people cry for years. In 70 years' time, kids watching it now will
Whaaaat????! be in old folks'
homes, saying, 'Oh, why couldn't Donna Noble have remembered
And he's bending over, fascinated, unable to see -
just one thing?!' There's this great misconception that the Slitheen are for kids,
and
episodes like Human
Nature and The Family of Blood are for adults. In fact, adults can
TWO CYBERMEN rearing up behind
him!!! enjoy daft green monsters, and kids can appreciate
emotional, grown-up drama. Pixar
END OF EPISODE
13 understands that perfectly. JK Rowling does. If kids are upset, then they're feeling
something, and kids feel
things vividly. The death of a goldfish is like the end of the
world. It's keen, real
and powerful for them. But that doesn't make it something to be

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES

avoided. If they can reach that state through fiction, well, they're actually experiencing And Ed Thomas said, 'Oy! I thought you were made of better stuff. Four years on this job something wonderful. And important. and you've never wimped out before.' I loved him for saying that.

Of course, very young kids might not get it, because forgetting has no analogy with It was Phil's last Tone Meeting. We had a strange round of applause. Strange, because their lives. They understand grief and loss, that's easy, because they've all lost that it was sad. goldfish, grandparent, mother, favourite pen, or been lost in a crowd, so they get it

when they see the Doctor lose Rose to a parallel world, or Nemo's dad lose his son in
 Text message from: Russell *Finding Nemo, or Harry Potter sees his dead mum and dad in the Mirror of Erised. It*

Sent: 24-Jan-2008 19:44 has an echo within them, whereas simply forgetting someone doesn't. What happens

On set today, Alex Kingston walked up to me and shouted through herto Donna is actually, beneath its simplicity, a fairly sophisticated sci-fi idea, so I think spacesuit helmet, 'Can you write me a part as a lipstick lesbian?!' I love a lot of younger kids might be puzzled. Or bored. That's why Wilf, with his lonely moments like that. salute, is so important, because you can register his loss. For adults, too, he really sells

the moment. But I can't think of a way in which a kid could think, even unconsciously, Text message from: Bent that's happened to me. Sent: 24-Jan-2008 20:18

Then again, you can never predict how kids will react. They're bloody clever. All It's great going on set at the moment, isn't it? Everyone is just gutted by that instinct. The writer Pete Bowker tells the best Doctor Who-viewing story ever. His what's in store for Donna in 4.13! son, Eric, watched Doomsday, and didn't particularly react to Rose's departure, but

then the bride, Donna, appeared in the TARDIS at the cliffhanger, and Eric turned to Text message from: Russell his dad and said, 'It's all right now, cos the good fairy has appeared to make the man Sent: 25-Jan-2008 11:16 better.' And that's not just cute: Pete said that to see such engagement with a story, so Bernard Cribbins just phoned me up: 1 have read Episode 13.1 have been emotionally and pictorially, for the first time ever, was actually a family triumph. crying for two days.'

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 23 JANUARY 21:39:11 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 26 JANUARY 2008 00:22:08 GMT RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR? RE: SKINS WINS! How was today's Tone Meeting? Did you make it through? (Or are you still

there? Where do you stand with the Christmas Special right now? How's life
in the ChristmasHave they locked the
doors?) Maybe?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 24 JANUARY 2008 00:22:08
GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 27 JANUARY 2008 09:00:23 GMT

SKINS

WINS!

RE:

SKINS WINS!I just got a text from the Broadcast Awards - Skim Series One has beaten Doctor Lordy God. Panic. I've been having a lot of thoughts - nothing coherent, not yet *Who Series Three! You've been e-mailing the wrong person, Benjamins. You should be* - for ages, but the rush of scripts has been so great that I haven't had time to tell you. doing - no, wait for it -The Life Of Bryan. Ha ha ha.
Cybermen, Victoriana, a swordfight on the roof with Cybershades (Cyberman heads

The Tone Meeting wasn't as endless as I thought. I'm not about to say that 4.13 is easy, in flowing black robes, like wraiths, sort of creepy half-Cybermen), workhouse kids no way, but actually there's a lot of sleight of hand. The end of the universe actually takes as slaves... That's all the normal plot stuff. The real heart of it is the beginning: the place in six or seven separate rooms, three of which are standing sets, with a lot of spectacle Doctor arrives, hears a damsel in distress, the Doctor steps forward to save her... when purely CGI. I think it's achievable. (Remember me saying this. Next week the bills come this other man swings in, dashing, brilliant, amazing, clever, witty, saves the day. Thein and I will bleed!) And that team is so excellent now. Piers was there to observe, and at Doctor says, 'Who are you?' The man says, 'I'm the Doctor!' Good scene. The Doctor times I thought, to him, we must be talking in shorthand. 'Scene 43, Shot 2, is a mid-shot becomes his companion. I like that. Sweet. There will be a beautiful woman too, of green screen, no reverse, like in Doomsday, yeah?' There was a great moment when I was course, but really it's the Doctor paired with a new Doctor. That's a lovely story and it's despairing of finding a location for the Crucible Test Area. I said, 'Let's face it, we're not got great potential. It would be wonderful if I had a month or two to let it stew. But going to find a big enough space that fits Dalek design. I might have to cut this sequence.' it's due in three weeks! I can hardly bear to look at it. The furnace!

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES

Quite apart from the time in which I have to write it, it's like relaxing-after-the-
 well, plots that we can't shoot, pages of arguing, the Doctor denying her a life
 withthirteenth-episode-is-delivered is hardwired into me. I can feel bits of my brain
 and him for no good reason other than my need to tie up the loose ends. Oh, it's
 drivingbody closing down. It's Herculean to keep going. And I'm not Hercules. I'm
 really, me mad. In Doomsday, Bad Wolf Bay was the best scene ever, and now
 I've made it theproperly, feeling old. I used to have the stamina to steamroller through this
 sort of location of the most unconvincing scene ever - and I don't know how to fix
 it. All sortsschedule, but it's lacking now. The last time I had my eyes tested, the optician
 asked of false notes are chiming. I think I hate the kiss between Rose and Doctor
 #2. That'smy age and said, 'You'll need bifocals soon. Your lenses won't be able to cope
 with when Rose's intelligence is zero. It makes me feel nothing, when I should be
 feelingreading for much longer.' Lo and behold, a few months later, it's like someone's
 thrown everything.a switch. Suddenly, overnight, my glasses are on and off, on and
 off. Proper, undeniable When I get this stuck, I start lying to myself. I tell myself
 that the Bad Wolf Bay sceneageing. You sort of think it'll never happen, but your body has
 other ideas. mustn't be that sad, because the really sad scene is Donna's
 departure. You can't have

Nah, it's worse than that. It's not just Grumpy Old Men stuff. Far worse is the
 snaky tragedy after tragedy. Well, there's a certain amount of sense in that, but it's
 still a lie.

little thought: if you had some coke, you'd have twice the energy and stay awake
 for I'm telling myself that to soothe myself for not getting the scene right in the
 first place.

longer. I haven't thought that seriously for years. This is the first time, in ten years
 or I'm supposed to be thinking about 4.14, but this Bad Wolf Bay scene has become a

so, of thinking, I need it. I know it's bollocks, I know, I know. I think I needed to
 type logjam in my head. It's all I can think about. Julie first made her comment about
 five

it out to see how stupid it
 looks. days ago, and I've been
 thinking about it ever since. One thing I do know: this isn't a

couple-
 of-lines rewrite. It's more fundamental. Julie keeps e-mailing with suggestions,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 31 JANUARY 2008 01:11:06
 GMT like Rose saying to the original, 'But he's not you', which only makes me
 say, 'So why

RE: SKINS

WINS!

stay with him?! This isn't a dialogue problem. There's no sentence that will paper over

Well, 4.13 is 170 FX days over! I've found about 88 to cut, and Phil has found 120, but the cracks. It's a plot rewrite. I've got the story wrong. And that's massive, potentially.

they're a bit severe, so I'm fighting them off. Never mind, we'll get there, I'm sure of that. In an episode that's already over-length (it's been timed at 67 minutes, damn it - this is

It's just that the actual getting there is such a slog. getting ridiculous) and over-budget, how do I think of a new story?!

I know what's really preying on my mind, though, and stopping me moving onto

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 31 JANUARY 2008 01:41:18 GMT

the Christmas Special. Julie said, 'That scene on Bad Wolf Bay isn't working, is it?'3

And she's absolutely right. I love a good note, because it's like someone has articulated **RE: SKINS WINS!**

the voice at the back of your head. That scene doesn't work. I have always known Yes, I suppose the original Bad Wolf Bay scene, in Doomsday, worked because the

Doctor

and Rose had to be separated. This scene isn't working because they choose to

that, from the moment I typed it out, but I don't know how to fix it. Rose has to be

be.

The imperative has gone. Ouch!

stupid to fall in love with Doctor #2. No matter what I do, that's not her Doctor. I

can Elastoplast over it by saying that Doctor #2 needs Rose, but that's slight. You don't

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 31 JANUARY 2008 01:51:04 GMT

feel that. Why doesn't Rose hop into the TARDIS and go with the real Doctor? The

walls of the universe are open enough for her to pop to and fro. She's always wanted to **RE: SKINS WINS!**

get him back, so why does she stay on Bad Wolf Bay? The hardest thing of all in that Well, exactly. And that raises another problem: if I work out a version in which they

scene - and Billie might yet have problems with it - is getting Rose to walk away from *have to be separated, aren't I repeating the first bloody version? Argh! Do you see?*

the TARDIS in the first place. That, indeed, is the problem with the whole scene, that

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, M ONDAY 4 FEBRUARY 200810:45:39 GMT

Rose has to act out of character to stay on Bad Wolf Bay. She's utterly, marvellously selfish, and would push past anyone to get to her Doctor. ,

RE: SKINS WINS!

I have to work out whose scene it is, too. In many ways, it's the Doctor's, the real I've made further FX cuts. Not just for FX, but also for page count. Firstly, the Shadow

Proclamation

Lobby has gone. Completely. Slitheen, space extras, monks and nuns.

Doctor's. David thinks it's a tragic scene, because it's all about the original, but that's

Poor

Louise Page - I hope she hasn't spent money on this already. (As we have with exactly what has reduced Rose's intelligence; she's doing what the plot demands, not

Margaret

Slitheen's voice. Annette Badland has already recorded her line!) Hey ho, what she'd demand. That's always wrong. But follow Rose's impulse and we're off into...

something

substantial had to go. The TARDIS now lands directly in the Shadow

Architect's

office. We'll still need the Judoon -- they'll be there with some 'Bo! Klo! Fo!'

3 The Doctor drops Doctor #2, Rose and Jackie 'home', on Bad Wolf Bay, on the parallel Earth.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES			
dialogue	--	but	we
now.		only	have
		four	of
		Text message from: Ben	them

Sent:

06-Feb-2008 20:18

All the stuff on Skaro with the Young Davros has been cut, too. The FX, plus the

Casual

Russell, I hope you aren't working tonight That shouldn't beward and the nurses and the soldiers, everything. It's heartbreaking, but what can you

your

priority. For once, let other people sort out the shit.do? Will Cohen is devastated.

However, I have asked for two extra FX shots - that's all we need - around Rose.

message from: RussellBrand new ones. Similar to the Voidstuff shots with the 3D glasses in Doomsday. This

06-Feb-2008 20:22should fix the problems with her plot. The Voidstuff surrounds anyone who crosses from

know, you're right, I'll stop soon. But no one else can rewrite this bastardone universe to another, so I can say that it's now contaminated or something, as though

I'll work till Friday, then I can stop and have a whole weekend off in- because of the Daleks' dimension-rupturing - it's become lethal if you're in the wrong

Manchester.universe. Rose has to stay in the parallel world - or she'll die. She has no choice.

message from: Russell

Text message from: Russell

07-Feb-2008 12:16

Sent: 04-Feb-2008 22:04

hobbling today. It's on the soles of my feet. There ain't no dignity.

I feel... blurgh! I get dizzy every time I turn my head. My eyes are all puffed

up. Oh well, it'll pass. I have to get on with work tomorrow. It can't

wait any

longer.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2008
18:18:09 GMT

RE:

SKINS WINS!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 5 FEBRUARY
2008 14:15:12 GMT

Manchest

hooray! My boyfriend, my clothes, my CDs, my... everything. Even my

RE:

SKINS

WINS!

full-sized

Dalek in the hall. (I've got to get rid of that. It's too much like work now.)

Chicken pox! I've got bloody chicken pox!!! I woke up today like a Doctor Who monster. With a bit of luck, I can stay here for ten days or so, but I'm itchy, scratchy and tired,

More lumps and bumps than... well, my normal lumps and bumps. I feel like crap. And I still have to rewrite 4.13. And I just realised, my plan to make the Bad Wolf

I'm going back to bed now. Must not scratch. Bay scene work -- the one involving Voidstuff - won't work, because I'd forgotten that

Mickey

has to be free to stay in our universe. Bollocks. Julie's upset. She's saying, 'Leave

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 6 FEBRUARY
2008 01:08:38 GMT Mickey in the parallel universe,' and I'm saying, 'Too late! We promised Noel that we'd

RE:

SKINS

WINS!

bring him

back in Torchwood Series Three.'

Chicken pox?! Didn't you get it out of the way when you were a kid? It's supposed to

be less of a bastard when you're young. (Sorry, not helping.) My mum used to make me

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 9
FEBRUARY 2008 19:01:46 GMT

go round to play at the houses of kids with chicken pox, hoping that I'd catch it!

RE: SKINS WINS!

Why

not have Rose admit that she's a terrible racist and she wants to stay in the parallel

Text

message

from:

Ben

world to rid herself of

Mickey? Yes, that'll do. Rose Tyler: Terrible Racist. That's not

Sent:

06-

Feb-2008 19:45

just an

idea, it's a spin-off.

Feeling any better? Today was fun. I was on set for Silence in the Library.

Swansea in the sunshine! Gorgeous set. AMAZING
lunch.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2008 19:24:12 GMT

Text RE:

SKINS WINS!

message from: Russell Sent: 06-Feb-2008

19:51

That's brilliant! Or maybe Freddie Ljungberg, Russell

Tovey and Charlie Hunnam

Amazing lunch? In Swansea?! I'm worse today, because I was
allergic to the could run past in speedos, and Rose thinks, hmm, okay, I'll stay here,
thank you very

pills, so my mouth blew up till I was having trouble breathing. I
had to go to much. That would work.

casualty. On a Wednesday morning. Not glamorous. Now my lips
are so big, I

look like a cartoon duck.

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TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2008 23:55:16 GMT

still
not quite working), except for the bit about Rose's departure, as written, having
no
resonance. We've all loved someone and it hasn't worked out, for whatever reason, **RE: SKINS WINS!**

so
we've found someone else. We've moved on. Even the teenage virgins find someone! watched the new Skins tonight, finally. But, but, but... that first episode is EXCELLENT!

real,
someone who exists beyond the posters on their bedroom walls. And yet we know what a change. What a show! Moments of absolute beauty - like Tony with Maxxie's

-- we
always know -- that the next love is not the same, they're not as good, we're settling mum, when she has to help him piss, and then they started laughing, that was perfect.

for
second best. We're all just making do. Like Judith in The Second Coming, we're all the tiny little fact that Maxxie's mum used to clean for Tony's mum. I loved it.

hoping
that someone better will come along, someone as incredible as our First Love

or as
perfect as the girl or boy in the posters on our bedroom wall. Or is that just me? FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2008 01:57:01 GMT

Oh
God... **RE: SKINS WINS!**

I'm glad you're watching. It's much better, isn't it? It's extraordinary and fascinating FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2008 14:18:55 GMT

that they had to destroy Tony in order to let the show breathe. I hear rumours that **RE: SKINS WINS!** Series Three will have an almost entirely new cast, to keep the show about 17- and 18- I take your point about accepting second best, making do with Doctor #2, and how year-olds. I think that's an incredible idea. Brave, aren't they? How are you feeling we can all recognise that, because we've all done it (we lie to kids, we tell them

those
that today? bedroom posters are fantasies - bollocks, they're the best! Everything else is a

pale
imitation), but the problem is, none of us does it THAT QUICKLY. Not in three

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2008 13:15:36 GMT
pages. Accepting second best is a quiet, passive condition - universal, yes, but you have

RE: SKINS WINS!

to
slide that into a drama. It's what Rose has done with Andy in Bob & Rose, it's what

Sick as a dog. The moment I stopped work, everything leapt on me. Today,
it's Vince does when he goes out with Cameron in Queer as Folk... they're
making do with

bronchitis! And I still haven't rewritten
4.13. compromises and imagining themselves happy,
wishing themselves happy, even if it

isn't
true. But no one does that in a crisis. It's gradual. I'll think on. I'm sure that I'm

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2008 02:14:07
GMT going to rewrite that scene again before it's shot.

RE: SKINS WINS!

I've whittled down 4.13 from 78 pages to 71. That's a miracle. I can't believe
I'm FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2008 22:05:31 GMT

delivering the final draft on the day that they start filming! That's horrific. **RE:**
SKINS WINS!

The Bad Wolf Bay scene still isn't working, but do you know what? No one's
giving I wonder whether Rose's decision works because it's quick. If she had time to
think

me good notes on it, when they should, so sod it. It's slightly better now, and I've
cut about it, of course she wouldn't stay on Bad Wolf Bay. As I read it, Rose accepts
second

the kiss between Rose and Doctor #2, but it still
sucks. best, Doctor #2, because her Doctor, the original
Doctor, manipulates her into doing

I know exactly what's wrong with it: it's too complicated. Emotionally, I mean.
It so. That's why it happens so suddenly. The whole 'He's too dangerous to be left on
his

has no echo, no resonance, it's empty sci-fi. When the Doctor and Rose were
separated own' speech -- 'He needs you. That's very me.' The original Doctor knows
how to hit a

into parallel universes in Doomsday, that felt like every love you've ever lost -- even
if nerve, doesn't he? He's pushing Rose away, making a magnificent sacrifice, because he

it's only the ones that you've lost in your head, like teenage virgins pining over
love loves her. That's why you describe him in the script as 'Heartbroken'. You're hung
up

songs in their bedroom. But when you've been separated into different universes,
but on the idea that Rose must be dumb to choose to stay on Bad Wolf Bay, but she
doesn't

now have a double of the man that you loved, who's not quite the same, but who's choose, does she? Not really. He does.

better because he's mortal, but worse because he's not the original... well, you're going

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2008 18:08:59 GMT

beyond human experience. There's no parallel with real life. No equation. Therefore,

no

feeling.

PANIC!!!

Sorry

I haven't written for a few days. On Monday, I've just two weeks to write the

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2008 02:22:06

GMT Christmas script... and I haven't a clue. There have been no Maybe thoughts while

I've

been ill, and now I'm worried because I'm still feeling ill. I've got this cough that

RE: SKINS WINS!

I agree with some of what you said about the Bad Wolf Bay scene (you're right, it's

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TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SATURDAY 1 MARCH 2008 16:47:51 GMT

I can't shake off, I'm losing sleep because I'm coughing so much, and naturally I think **RE: PANIC!!!** it's cancer because, well, that's what smokers think. I'm cocking things up like buggery Ahh, that's the one! That Bad Wolf Bay scene is better now, isn't it? Never mind Julie here. I'm going back to Cardiff on Monday. I need to be there, to lock myself away, to and David... are you happy with it, Russell? panic some more and bang my head against the wall.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 1 MARCH 2008 17:13:56 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. FRIDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2008 19:16:03 GMT

RE:

PANIC!!!

I am delighted. That is such a weight off my mind. Knowing that it wasn't working was **RE: PANIC!!!**

driving me mad. It hung over me, during Chicken Pox Fortnight. Literally, all the time. »I never think of it as work, really, no matter how much hard graft I actually do. Even

I tell you what helped: I watched the footage of the 4.12/4.13 read-through. They filmed if no one ever saw this stuff, I'd be doing it anyway. « it for Doctor Who Confidential, then edited it together fast so that I could see it - and

Ahem. they had to read the first draft of 4.13, because that's all that I'd written. It was so slow!

(I'd been worried that cutting all that history-of-Davros stuff had gutted the script and

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2008 19:18:16 GMT

left it a bit vacuous, but then I realised that it's the best cut I could have made, because

RE:

PANIC!!! the read-through drags terribly around about those scenes.) I could see what worked

SOD

OFF!

You're and what didn't, and I realised how good the kiss was, but equally that the kiss had no

right, consequence. though.

That's why it wasn't earning its place. But it's obvious, in the end, isn't it?

scene is about Rose choosing between two Doctors. So, on the last draft, finally, I've

Text **message** **from:**
Ben written clearly,
obviously, Rose making that choice. Rose is in control.

Sent: **25-Feb-2008**
23:12 The rushes have
helped, too. When Rose is in the TARDIS with Doctor #2, Billie
Please don't tell me you missed tonight's Skins...?! How shocking was Sid's
him with sheer lust. As only Billie can do! That, too, puts the power into
dad's death? That long, lonely day in Sid's house, that was just wonderful.
The mechanics start to work... Rose's hands.
Bryan Elsley, all is forgiven!

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 3 MARCH 2008 23:50:38 GMT

PANIC!!!

Text message from: Russell

did you see Skins tonight? Blimey! It's not afraid to take risks, is it? It's a different

Sent: 26-Feb-2008 00:32

each week. A lot like Doctor Who, actually. But every episode has such a strong,

That episode was brilliant. BRILLIANT! Isn't it weird? Skins has got so much

unique voice. I don't know whether that comes from Bryan Elsley or from

better by bringing the parents right into the centre and by sidelining the

team of young writers. But Skins makes me feel so out of touch with domestic drama.

shagging and clubbing somewhat. In some ways, it's the opposite of what it

kind of dread going back to writing that stuff, like it's something I've forgotten. No,

was. Bloody marvellous, though.

forgotten, something that I've moved too far away from. And a world which is

perfectly well without me. Damn them!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 1 MARCH 2008 1 6:28:17 GMT

I think of giving up writing, and that thought seems utterly wonderful.

RE:

PANIC!!!

Like

bliss. Like a release. Freedom. Imagine having no deadlines ever again. Sometimes

I've rewritten Bad Wolf Bay again. Finally, I've got it right!
I think very strongly that I really could stop for ever.
That shouldn't feel so brilliant,

Basically, I've given more of the decision to Rose, put her in controj, and used that should it? I don't know. Maybe it's the pox talking. No, it's just the middle-aged

control to push away the original Doctor. And the kiss is back in! Then the scene businessman talking, that's all. But I do get so tired of Scene 1, Scene 2, Scene 3, on

finishes as before: Rose saying, 'No -- !', as the TARDIS fades away, Doctor #2 taking and on and on. Maybe I should try to write a book... ?

her hand, and a wide shot of the now-empty beach. Julie is happy, David is happy, phew, good. Series Four, final rewrite, done.

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DOCTOR

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S

CHA

TALE

TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES

they're

phasing through the Tardis.FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 4 MARCH 2008
00:07:55 GMT

FX:

CU that Cyberman fades, gone.**RE: PANIC!!!**

You couldn't stop writing, Russell. You wouldn't last six months. The Doctor runs to the console, throwing levers -

How does a writer know when they've found their voice, do you think? Can you

DOCTOR (CONT'D) Fallingknow? Or is it for others to tell you? Must your voice be unique? Aren't writers -- like through the Vortex! But heading for where...?musicians -- imitators by trade? Does finding your voice begin with imitating other,

The

Tardis lurches, CAMERA SHAKE! The Doctor running around more accomplished writers, do you think?

the

console, feverish, levers, buttons, switches, then -

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 4 MARCH 2008 02:18:21 GMT
Bump! Landed! The Doctor runs to the door, heading out -

CYBERMAN

ARSE

TO:Ha ha, you're right, I couldn't stop writing for ever. Not even for six months. What

2.

EXT. VICTORIAN STREET - DAYwould I do? I'm a slave to this job. Oh dear...

Look, I finally started 4.14. Christ, I hate starting. It just says: such a long way to go. THE DOCTOR steps out of the Tardis.

Funny to think, the last Christmas script, that was the very first script that I ever sent Snow! In a STREET MARKET. It's a working-class area of London, you, and now we're onto next Christmas already. This one hasn't exactly got Kylie and all busy and bustling...the Titanic, but it's got a different sort of hook...

Vendors,

cocky lads, working girls, crones, braziers, beggars

in

doorways, hot chestnuts, smoke, steam, the works.

1. INT. TARDIS - NIGHT

The

Doctor walking through. Gradually relaxing into a smile.

REPEAT the end of 4.13: THE DOCTOR alone. He walks around

the Soaking it in. He's loving it, the sheer colour and bustle and
console. A bleep from the scanner, he studies
it... noise; this is what he travels for.

THE

DOCTOR Throughout all this, a CAROL can be
heard; a new Murray Gold

What? Christmas
Carol. Jolly & sinister, like the best hymns. The

(looks
closer)
listen. Then he Doctor passes the CAROLLERS, stops for a

What?? wanders
on, calls out to an URCHIN:

(even closer)

Whaaaaat??
DOCTOR You
there, boy, what day is this?

And he's bending forward, staring, not noticing... the TWO
CYBERMEN rearing up behind
him!! URCHIN
Christmas
Eve, sir!

NEW MATERIAL. The Doctor spins round - !

DOCTOR THE DOCTOR

(CONT'D) In what year?

What?!

FX: THE TWO CYBERMEN... fade
away... You thick or something?

The Doctor looks round, hearing a
whoosh... THE DOCTOR
Oy!

Answer the question!

FX: THE TWO CYBERMEN reappear, fading up at the top of the

ramp. Both flailing, slowly, as if
falling... URCHIN
Year
of our Lord 1851, sir.
The Doctor takes a step towards them, boggling!

DOCTOR

FX: and the two CYBERMEN fade again. A second later, one fades
back into existence, right by the wooden door; it's as
though Good, right, fine, and I don't suppose you've seen any

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWELVE: TIME FOR HEROES			

men, sort of tall, sort of metal, men made of metal,
 with ears, like handles, big handle things, metal,
 no...? remark, since that series was so close to home - so close
 that it still staggers me to watch

it
 from afar, now. I did, in some ways, find my voice, but I wasn't aware of it. All this
 Suddenly, a woman's voice, a distance away, yelling -
 analysis exists outside the script. I just got on with it and
 wrote the next piece.

ROSITA
 OOV You can see voices in scripts, can't you?
 The difference between Steven's and mine?

Doctor! And
 it's always such a reflection of the person. I mean, look at Steven: he's all tough and
 Scottish,
 full of lethal gags (both in life and in script), and quite a lustful man, I think, a

THE DOCTOR
 ... who,
 me? writer clearly
 driven by sex. More significantly, under that gruff exterior, a wonderful and
 romantic
 man, who hates to give that away - except in his writing. Again, again, again,

ROSITA OOV
 scripts
 don't just live in Script World; they exist alongside everything else that you love
 Doctor!!!

and
 hate in your whole, wide, mad, lovely life. You copy from - or rather, are influenced
 Big grin! And he's running - ! by
 - everything.

TRACK with him, racing through the snow, exhilarated -
 I'm sure a lot of this e-mail correspondence amounts to
 Handy Tips, and that's fine,
 he's actually glad to hear someone calling his name -
 but everyone should find their own way to write. You must.
 Thing is, copying isn't just

copying;

it's selecting. It's not a dumb process. You can be aware of the fact that, yes, The best title for this episode would be The Two Doctors... but maybe not. The New you've taken that phrasing or spacing off me, or Moffat, or Bryan Elsley or whoever, *Doctor, perhaps? Or The Next Doctor** *I quite like The Next Doctor. I'm glad to have* but what you're not so consciously aware of is the stuff that you're choosing not to use. started, though worried by what's to come. I had a fair bit of Cybermen-in-Victoriana If, say, you happen to like my one-line-pause technique, you'll know that you lifted worked out, but this two Doctors story, the real story, is so strong that it's sort of it off me. At the same time, you'll have discarded techniques from my scripts that knocking out everything else. That's good. It shows that it's a strong concept. But it's you don't like. That's not merely copying, but selecting, editing and adapting. It's a kind of left me clutching broken bits of story. Then again, a lot of that Cybermen stuff good, intelligent process of choosing, not imitating. So grab it all. From anyone. Readwars dark - graveyards and things - whereas this new stuff is fun and lively, it's even scripts, lots of them. Not just Doctor Who scripts. Go into the TV department of your going to get knockabout, and that's good for Christmas Day. nearest bookshop, grab any and every script book and bury yourself in them.

You ask how a writer finds their voice. Now, that's a question! Everyone has a voice, in If you're thinking of writing your first script (oh, go on!)... well, I know what it's like. life and in print, but finding it in print takes time. There's no technique for finding it, I It's so easy to put off. Maybe you just don't write until you're ready, but I worry that's don't think, and it's never 100 per cent individual. Yes, imitate like hell. Everyone does. too easy an excuse, because then you could spend your whole life being not-quite-ready. But I'm not sure that it happens on purpose; it's a natural process. We all do it in speech, You've got to start. The kids writing Skins are in their teens and early twenties! There is no maybe even with thought. I can hear conversational riffs in my speech patterns that are time to waste! The whole world is full of unwritten scripts. There's a marvellous bit in Peertorn from my friends, dozens of people, and writing is the same. Gaining a voice, whatever *Gynt where he's surrounded by Songs, and they sing, 'We are songs, / you should have* that is, comes with experience and practice - and the writing, again, is indivisible from sung us. / A thousand times / You have curbed and suppressed us. / In the depths of your the person. Your voice tends to be something that other people talk about, about you. It's heart / we have lain and waited... / We were never called forth - / now we poison your not something that you think about much yourself, and certainly not whilst writing. I voice.' That must feel terrible - and obviously feels true of everyone, even if you've-written never - never - sit here thinking, what's my voice? You might as well ponder, who am I? as many books as Stephen King or Agatha Christie. Don't be stifled and strangled. It is, in fact, exactly the same thing. You can wonder your whole life and you'll never get It's so important to start writing, because then the process never, ever ends. Finding an answer to that. your voice isn't the last stage, just another stage along the way. You reach the top of that

After all these years of wondering, I've never realised those last four sentences quite mountain, only to see a whole bloody, endless range of mountains waiting beyond.

so clearly! This Great Correspondence does me good. You've a million more things to reach for, a million more variations on your voice to

So the voice exists simply because you exist. You find your voice by writing, by articulate. Because your writing always lacks something. Mine does, Moffat's does,

experience. It doesn't matter what exactly you're writing, just that you are writing. Then even Paul Abbott's does, everyone's does, and that's why we spend the rest of our lives,

one day someone will say, 'You've really found your voice with that piece', and you'll still typing away in the dark, trying to get better. Until we die.

think, eh? Really? Everyone said it to me on Queer as Folk. It was kind of obvious, an easy There's a note to end on!

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BOOK TWO

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

In which the CyberKing rises,
Russell contemplates kissing Davros,
and lanto's fate is sealed

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 4 MARCH 2008 22:01:34 GMT

BOOK COVER

Russell, take a look at the attached jpeg. It's Ebury's mock-up cover for The Writer's

Tale} We're a book! A proper book! With a cover and everything! The Foreword by

Philip Pullman' line is a placeholder. We'll never get him. Worth asking, though.

Always worth asking. Thoughts?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2008 00:46:41 GMT

RE: BOOK COVER

Hello Benjamino,

Sorry I didn't reply yesterday. I sort of went into shock. It never really occurred

to me that a book co-written by me, about me, would have me on the cover. Duh!

Obvious. But oh, it's horrifying. I'm sorry, I really am quite horrified. It looks like

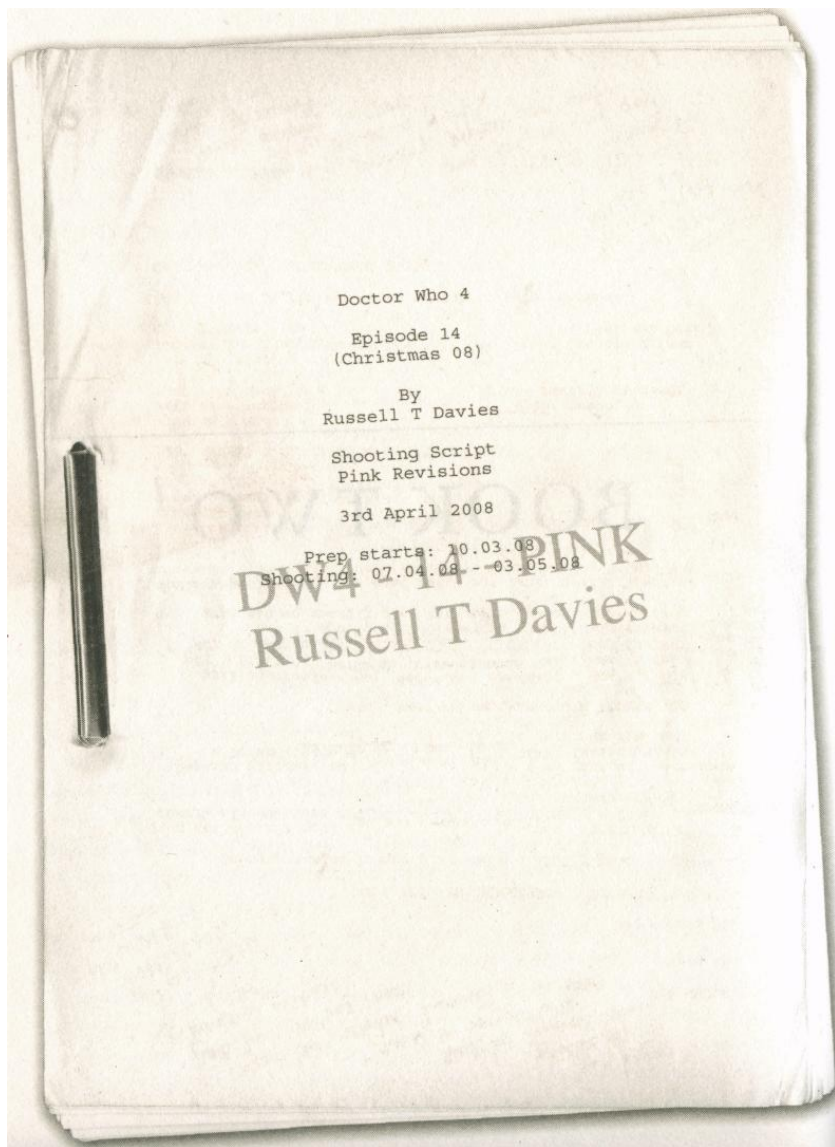
vanity publishing. Stood there on the TARDIS set, it looks like I am the bloody

Doctor. I'm not arguing, really, because I can see that it makes sense. But ouch! I

mean, be honest, imagine seeing yourself as a book cover. Christ almighty. It's a lovely

1 BBC Books is an imprint of Ebury Publishing, a Random House Group company, and publisher of The Writer's Tale and The

Writer's Tale: The Final Chapter.



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THIRTEEN: WHAT HAPPENED NEXT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 10 MARCH 2008 03:09:42 GMT design. I'm not knocking the design. But, but, but... before we commit, is there any

other option? Like a scrapbook sort of cover? I.e. a cover that isn't me? Don't mistake

Genuinely, I wonder how much a photo of my face would actually

this-other-Doctor mystery is a helpful guide

It pulls me through the story... which doesn't mean the story is good. It could help sell a book...? Not at all, I'd think.

fall to shit in my hands. Is it obvious who the 'next Doctor' is? Well, not obvious,

As you said, worth asking.

P.S. Love a foreword. Philip Pullman is a great idea. Nice one. But how the hell do but how much is it fooling anyone? It's hard to tell. Is it even interesting? It's unusual

a Christmas Day episode to have this much plot. I'm not sure it fits. It's more of we get in touch with Philip Pullman?

night for spectacle, though I suppose the soaps do well at Christmas, so people do

a twisting plot. But it still feels like more of a Boxing Day story. FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2008 01:16:39 GMT

of today, these first 34 pages of script have been distributed to the production

RE: BOOK COVER

Some of them saw the first ten pages last week, but since then I've made changes

Listen, if you're uncomfortable with that cover, I'll argue that we should go for

from the start. I've changed the look of the Cyberleader, for instance. He has that

something else. You have to feel comfortable with this book. All of it. There are always visible-brain-in-a-head now, like the Cyber Controller in The Age of Steel. But only if

other options. But... look, I'd give it a few days. See how you feel after the weekend. we can afford it.

Personally? I love that cover. (But would it work better in colour, do you think?) And

it is only a first draft. Ebury are saying that we can do another, newer photo shoot
for FROM. BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T
DAVIES, MONDAY 10 MARCH 2008 22:23:07 GMT

the cover
proper...
THE NEXT DOCTOR

day! It was Julian Bleach's last. His final shot was exposing Davros' decaying

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2008 02:33:58 GMT

Time was running short, but Graeme Harper was just about holding it all

RE: **BOOK**
COVER

Peter Bennett told him, 'You'd bloody better finish -- or we'll leave you here

Sorry, it's just... oh, the shock. I'll think on it. I
promise. on your own with a
camera!' Poor Graeme.

In the meantime, I'm sending you more 4.14 script. It includes a stunt
sequence I interviewed Julian afterwards. Lots
of concise and straight-to-the-point answers,

that's so complicated I can't see how the hell we shoot
it.2 but a thoughtful and
courteous man. I like him. 'Davros was very probably inspired

Hitler,' he said, 'and I found that to be quite a useful reference point, particularly in

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2008 15:14:18 GMT

of his more dogmatic speeches.' (He added, 'I am actually creating a whole new

RE: **BOOK**
COVER

at the moment, but to say any more would spoil the surprise!' Ha ha.)

'The CyberKing will rise, indeed. How like a man.' Ha!

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 11 MARCH 2008 22:33:34 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2008 18:00:02
GMT **RE: THE NEXT DOCTOR**

RE: **BOOK**
COVER

just seen the Dalek Crucible rushes. Davros' torso!!! That shot is marvellous, and

Yes, bit dodgy, that

line.

alarm

Oh, you can see panic in the air, the way there are so many single takes.

it's fantastic. There's Sarah Jane, and Rose, and Jackie, and two Doctors watching

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2008 18:06:09

GMT

Catherine Tate save the universe! I think

those drugs went deeper into my head than

RE:

BOOK

COVER

ever realised. The best bits are the explosions, when all the women scream like girls

I

love

that

line.

and Jack too, probably! (Hey, was everyone getting on, or was there companion

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 6 MARCH 2008 18:10:15

GMT

I'm excited by Davros. Very excited. A

much cleverer mind than the Master, I think

RE:

BOOK

COVER

look what he's achieved, compared to the Master. Empires! The Master never achieved

Okay, I'm keeping it! I'm just hoping no boring bastard questions
it. so much. While I wrote the Master as

a genius in Series Three, he's fatally flawed by his

hatred/love of the Doctor; that's what allows the Doctor to defeat him, in the

2 The Doctor and the 'next Doctor' lasso a Cybershade, which drags them up the wall of a nearby building, through the top-

storey window and along the floor, heading for another window. Rosita, companion to the 'next Doctor', arrives in the nick of

time and cuts the rope with an axe.

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Phew. I would have been so sad if there were tension. I hope John Barrowman's kept his trousers zipped. We can't have Lis Sladen suffering that indignity.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 13 MARCH 2008 14:48:25 GMT

THE NEXT DOCTOR

Text message from: Ben

If I'm really stuck on a line, I'll write something like a placeholder, and move on. But

Sent: 12-Mar-2008 16:32

not often. That's rare. I'll usually hammer away at it, on the spot, until it's right. That

I'm back in London, on set with ITV's Demons. I've just interviewed isn't to say that it won't change later, or the next morning, when I look back at it. The

Mackenzie Crook. Quite shy, but so enthusiastic about Doctor Who. line that I um-ed and er-ed over so much last night wasn't even a 'real' line. It has no

How come you've never cast him? character, it's info-dump, it breaks the fourth wall, and it talks to the audience. It has

heart. Maybe that's why I struggled.

Text message from: Russell

More often, I get stuck on why does this scene exist, how do I solve this plot, and,

Sent: 12-Mar-2008 16:50

crucially, where is this heading? But every time I cut that 'stolen from the Daleks' line,

We've asked Mackenzie Crook a million times, but the dates have I fretted and put it back. I keep thinking of all those eight-year-olds who love this stuff

always clashed. In fact, he was almost cast as Clive in Episode 1 -- the and follow it, and would be asking that question.

very first Episode 1 - before we got lovely Mark Benton instead.

message from: Ben

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 13 MARCH 2008 02:49:30 GMT

Sent: 13-Mar-2008 22:32

RE:

THE

NEXT

DOCTOR

shoot. DALEKS! ACTUAL DALEKS! ON THE STREETS! (Why is it so

More script. The mystery revealed.³¹ suppose it's not much of a surprise, but I'm not exciting to see Daleks on real streets? It just is.) It's like Blade Runner, in

sure I want it to be. I like it when it creeps up on you, ahead of the action - or maybe Cardiff! With Daleks!

that's my excuse for not hiding it better. I'm writing a mystery - unusual for me, I don't often do that - so maybe I should learn to hide things, like Steven hides things...? Oh, Text message from: Russell

I don't know.
13-Mar-2008 22:40

I got ridiculously hung up on how the Cybermen could know a lot about the Doctor Argh, i can't wait to see the rushes. Graeme is doing such a good job.

you, you won't be so happy at 5.30am.

3 The 'next Doctor' is revealed to be Jackson Lake, a Victorian gentleman who believes that he's the Doctor - a fugue state

brought on by the murder of Lake's wife and kidnap of his son by the Cybermen.

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THIRTEEN: WHAT HAPPENED NEXT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 14 MARCH 2008 06:05:51 GMT

THE NEXT DOCTOR

Text message from: Ben

actually frozen! Dead from the waist down. (Or is it the waist up?) That was one

Sent: 14-Mar-2008 00:20

of a shoot. Nerves on edge. Tempers fraying by the end. The first day on this

It's so cold, my hands have dropped off. My career as a journalist is

that was genuinely tense. The footage looks incredible, though. David and Billie over. I'm useless to everyone.

their slow-mo sprint towards each other, from 4.12. (David: 'Should I dance as

run?') It's epic and perfect. Long way to go, I know, but it's bound to be one hell of

Text message from: Russell

episode. And then Graeme asked David not to wince so much as the lone Dalek

Sent: 14-Mar-2008 00:26

him. David: 'But that was my best acting of the night!' Billie: 'This is no

You can always teach. Ho ho. I'm writing the Doctor finally meeting time for acting.'

Miss Hartigan.⁴ 'Yet another man come to assert himself against me in I interviewed Billie. She talked about watching Freema as her replacement in Series

the

night!'

Three.

I think it bothered me for about a day -- and then I just got over it. I thought

be a lot more jealous of Freema than I was.' Interesting. One of Billie's reasons

Text

message

from:

Ben
coming back for these episodes is, she says, the chance to work with Freema and

Sent: 14-Mar-2008
00:37

See, they really do love each other. Sickening, isn't it?

Not camp at all, then! It's raining
now. But the
quote of the night? As Billie cradled a dying David in her arms, Johnny B

her that she has a moustache! To which she replied, 'It's low times for Rose

Text message from:
Ben

She hasn't used a waxing strip since she last saw the Earth. Razors are in short

Sent: 14-Mar-2008
02:48
on her parallel world!

We're huddled in the camera truck, reminiscing about the
Brandon Right, I need sleep. I
haven't slept for 23 hours. I'll read the 4.14 script when I wake.

Estate.5 Phil: Thank God we don't have to film there any more.'
Billie: I'm cold and exhausted, and that's no
condition to enjoy Cybermen.

'Never say never.' Can't you bring her back for the Specials?

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 15 MARCH 2008 02:54:15
GMT

Text message from:
Russell RE: THE
NEXT DOCTOR

Sent: 14-Mar-2008
02:50
Oh, that's
enough. I sat down to write five hours ago, but I've hardly written anything.

There's a
thought. Two
scenes, that's all... and the first one is dull. But I'm sitting here thinking, really.

up to the grand finale. It had better be grand. This is all quite tame so far.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 14 MARCH 2008
03:16:02 GMT Hmph.

RE: THE NEXT

DOCTOR

you're working late on a Friday or Saturday, do you get mates texting, off

Here you go. More script. If you're not too frozen. (Stay in the camera truck.) It's so their heads in clubs? Yeah, yeah, have a nice time. There were tons tonight. Shaddup,

stupid, this writing lark. I spent all day stuck, not writing, because I couldn't work out the lot of you.

a way for the Doctor to meet Miss Hartigan. You've got to have the Doctor meeting the villain, but I was in danger of everyone heading underground to the Cybermen's FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 16 MARCH 2008 04:01:28 GMT

stronghold, and the Doctor and Miss Hartigan having no sort of encounter at all. I **RE: THE NEXT DOCTOR**

couldn't work out how to do it, where to do it, when. All day, gone. Pissed off. Then Here's more nonsense. I'm worried that it's sort of descended into a runaround. That's

I sat down to write, with no solution, and... thought of it! Immediately. Obvious. why I've made Miss Hartigan even more powerful towards the end, when she becomes

Simple. If I'd started sooner... ah, the only way to write is to write. For all my banging the CyberKing. I wasn't planning that. I invented it tonight, on the spot, but it's

on about what to do if you're really stuck on something, there's nothing dumber than galvanised me. That character is really taking off. I hope I finish it soon.

sitting there writing nothing at all. Stupid bastard job.

4 Miss Mercy Hartigan (played by Dervla Kirwan) is the Cybermen's human ally in Doctor Who 4.14.

5 The Brandon Estate, in South London, served as the location for the fictional Powell Estate, where Rose and Jackie Tyler

live in Doctor Who Series One and Two.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
THIRTEEN: WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 17 MARCH 2008 04:52:58 GMT
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 16 MARCH 2008 11:21:48 GMT

RE:
THE NEXT DOCTORRE: THE NEXT DOCTOR

Any further thoughts on titles? Court of the CyberKing,
perhaps? You've finished? Are you ridiculously happy?
You must be. I suppose it's not quite over,

though.
You've got to afford it. All those weeks of FX and design wrangling... but the
FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 16 MARCH 2008 11:39:13 GMT

toughest
bit is done. Celebrate good times, come on!

RE: THE NEXT DOCTOR

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 17 MARCH 2008 04:58:40 GMT
It was Court of the CyberKing (how did you guess?), but I'm so attracted by the thought

RE:
THE NEXT DOCTOR of 4.13 ending with that traditional credit, now saying,
'Doctor Who will return at

Yeah,
and Torchwood Series Three storylining starts next Tuesday. Christ alive! But
right Christmas in... THE NEXT DOCTOR'. The speculation! There would be a
genuine

now
I feel brilliant. Well, no, too knackered to feel brilliant. Sex is brilliant. Cassoulet
is buzz. It's what this would be called if it didn't have Special status. The Cybermen

brilliant.
My friend Tracy is brilliant. I just feel tired, and smoky, and bleary. But I've aare
window-dressing; it's all about Jackson Lake, really. I'll run it past Julie, see her

quiet
day tomorrow. I might feel brilliant then.
reaction.

The whole script is due in tomorrow. We've the bloody Tone Meeting on
Wednesday.

Text message from: Russell

Do you know what? I might get there. With a CyberKing about to rise, and a
hot-air

Sent: 18-Mar-2008 16:27

balloon waiting in the wings, it's not hard to see what's going to happen...
Are you on set? How's the former Prime Minister?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 17 MARCH 2008 00:45:18 GMT

Text

message from: Ben

RE: THE NEXT DOCTOR
Mar-2008 16:34 Sent: 18-

A nightmare on set tonight. They're in the big police traffic-control centre, doubling
No, I'm on my way there. They're filming in a cottage in Dinas Powys, a
for UNIT HQ in New York - because it looks good, it's got lots of screens and things
village known affectionately as 'Dinky Pooh'. Is this befitting a former
- but we secured the location on the condition that they'd have to commandeer it back
PM?

if there was anything like, say, a major road traffic accident. Two hours into filming:

major road traffic accident! Far more important than a Doctor Who schedule, I know,
Text message from: Russell

but... do they stop? Don't they? Everyone on a knife-edge, whilst completely - and
Sent: 18-Mar-2008 16:35

genuinely - sympathetic. But they're carrying on. For the moment. Knowing the plug
You just want to see her die in Dalek death rays, don't you?

could be pulled any minute if some Chief Constable walks in and says, quite rightly,

'What the hell are these people doing here?!'
Text message from: Ben

Anyway, I'm so close to finishing The Next Doctor. So tired! But while I said I don't
Sent: 18-Mar-2008 16:39

get sentimental over work, that doesn't stop me getting celebratory. It's like there's a big
Yes. Well, that and the free dinner.

party building up in my head... but I've got to crush it, because I haven't quite got there

yet. Onwards! You still
up?
Text message
from: Russell

18-Mar-2008 16:41

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 17 MARCH 2008 01:00:11

GMT
Wilton on

I would hope it's all tablecloths and candelabra with Dame

RE:
DOCTOR

THE

NEXT

set

We must have standards.

Yeah, still working. Done myself a chicken stir-fry. It sounds like hell on set.

Text

message from: Ben

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 17 MARCH 2008 04:47:26

GMT

Sent: 18-Mar-2008 16:42

RE:
DOCTOR

THE

NEXT

It'll be

chicken wings and chips as per usual. She's a FORMER Prime

The Next Doctor is done! I'm very pleased with it, I think. I'll go to bed now.
I probably Minister.

won't get up until about 11 am.

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THIRTEEN: WHAT HAPPENED NEXT**DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE**

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SUNDAY 23 MARCH 2008 02:04:12
GMT

HELLO

AGAIN!

Text message from: Russell

I've
been thinking. I know, I know, I really should stop doing that. It only leads

Sent: 18-Mar-2008 16:43

to
trouble. But there's something I've been meaning to say. Something that's been
Mmm... chicken wings.

bothering
me. It's about 4.13. Bear with me...

It's
a nine-out-of-ten script. One thing is standing between that nine and a ten...

Text message from: Ben

and
it's the final scene. Back in January, I remember asking you why exactly that scene

Sent: 18-Mar-2008 21:48

was
there at all. 'To end on an upbeat note,' you said. To remind us that there are
I've just interviewed Penelope. I would do anything for Russell T

'new
adventures to come'. But I can't help thinking... doesn't that defeat the object of
Davies,' she said. 'I think he's an incredible writer, and he's created
a that ending? It's supposed to be sad. It's meant to be tragic. The
Doctor and Rose are

wonderfully witty person in Harriet Jones.' Bet you wish you
hadn't parted again (for ever this time?), and Donna is right back
where she started, with no

exterminated her
now. recollection of how
amazing a person she can be. That's tear-jerking. Maybe a little bit
bleak.

But also it's brilliant, deeply affecting and, above all, an incredibly brave ending.

Text message from:
Russell It's noble! And then the bloody
Cybermen pop up in the TARDIS and... well, that

Sent: 18-Mar-2008
22:03 spoils it a bit. It's too easy. It's not
even shocking. It's a bit rubbish, really. It's a watered-

You're right. I'll bring her
back. down version of the endings to Series Two
and Three, even down to the 'What? What?'

Whaaaaat???'
gag. Ending on Wilf, standing there in the rain, saluting the Doctor, or

Text message from:
Ben on the Doctor alone in
the TARDIS... isn't that a hundred times better? What does

Sent: 18-Mar-2008
22:10 that scene with the
Cybermen add to the plot? Nothing at all. So what if you leave us

After each take, Phil's screaming, 'NO, SHE ESCAPES!' Poor deluded
in
floods of tears? That's great television.

Phil. Besides,
you don't really need a scene at the end that throws forward to the Christmas

Special:
for the first time in four years, you'll have filmed the Special by the time that

Text message from: Russell

Episode
13 airs, so you can include a trailer after the end credits. Moreover, what's

Sent: 19-Mar-2008 14:55

the
one thing in The Next Doctor script that doesn't really work either? The opening
I'm stuck in Upper Boat. It's the 4,14 Tone Meeting. I still haven't
seen scene! (Well, isn't it? You know it is.) The Doctor pushes some buttons on
the TARDIS

last night's rushes, but Phil has acted out Penelope's death scene
for console and - oh, look - the Cybermen disappear. If you cut the final scene
of 4.13,

us. At
length. you can cut the opening

scene of 4.14, the cliffhanger resolution, and improve both

episodes

immeasurably. C'mon, you know it makes sense.

Text **message** **from:**
Russell Invisible Ben is dead. Long live
Visible Ben. Etc. Ha ha. Tell me to sod off if you want.

Sent: 19-Mar-2008 21:03

Dear God. Tone over. Survivors ate the
dead. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
SUNDAY 23 MARCH 2008 02:35:31 GMT

RE:

HELLO AGAIN!

Text **message** **from:**
Ben Damn it, Benjamino, I'll
do anything for a ten-out-of-ten script. But... but... yes,

Sent: 19-Mar-2008
21:39 it's a sad ending, yes, it's
tragic, but that's not the keynote of Doctor Who, is it? Well,

How much do you have to
cut? maybe it's becoming so. But
this is a show about danger, and monsters, and a mad man

in a
blue box. The Doctor versus the monsters, that's what you get from the Cybermen

Text **message** **from:**
Russell ending. The tragedy of poor Donna
-- it's like a death -- I don't think that's the right

Sent: 19-Mar-2008
21:41 note to end on. The finality of it.
You could almost turn your telly off and say, 'Right,

Oh, not much. No CGI Cybershades, only practical ones... but
that's it, that's the end,' and it's my job to make sure that people never, ever do
that. The story

the rest is intact. So far. They're the best team in the
world. goes on, the Doctor survives. The final scene does add to the plot,
because it's a new

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

plot. Yes, I've done that 'What? What?? Whaaaat???' twice before, but that's the point.

It's a running gag. I'd like to think that it's almost expected now. Imagine it without

that ending. People would be saying, 'What, no "Whaaaat???"...?'

Hmm. I'm saying all that, but... well, you have tapped into something there, maybe, because there was a problem with that scene. They had to phone me from

set. The problem being: how wet is David? He's just stepped out of the rain, then he's

got to run straight from that TARDIS scene and directly into the Christmas Special,

chasing Cybermen. But he can't spend the whole of 4.14 soaking wet. Over the phone,

we reached a compromise: David is a bit tussled, he's dried off his jacket, so it's a few

minutes later when he meets the Cybermen. That's what they shot. But it's one of those

on-the-spot decisions that's put my teeth on edge. (My fault.) You should feel that the

Doctor has just left Wilf, that he's still thinking of Donna. By putting in an offstage

break, it's kind of interrupted the sadness. Plus, they didn't shoot the-Doctor-walking-

around-the-console-sadly for long enough. You can imagine the music swelling, the

tragedy of it all... but not for only ten seconds! We need longer, so we've already set

that aside for a reshoot. Gaps are opening up in that scene.

But I do like it. Honestly. You should see it. When the Cybermen stand into shot,

it's like... wow! Cybermen! Great ending!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2008 22:30:02 GMT

RE: HELLO AGAIN!

Do you know what? It takes time. For notes to sink in, sometimes. And I've kept thinking about what you said, about the Cybermen. It's kept niggling. Partly because

you've spent most of these e-mails being Invisible Ben, so for you to pipe up, you must

feel it strongly...

Oh God. What I'm saying is: you're right. I think you're right. Hand on heart, when

you get a good note, it chimes with something that you're already thinking. Right at the back of my mind, I think I'd always thought, right from the moment I typed

that last scene, that the runaway bride was brilliant, the Titanic was brilliant, and

the Cybermen... aren't. They're kind of a poor cousin to those first two cliffhanger

surprises. Catherine Tate and the world's most famous ship were just gobsmacking.

Cybermen, not so much. I knew that. It just took me a long time to hear it.

And I'd completely forgotten that we'll have shot the material to run a proper Christmas Special trail. Good point! Everything I'm saying about 'new adventures to

come', we can achieve that after the credits.

Also, we're way over on the 4.14 FX list, and Scene 1 has a good 15 days of FX, as the

Cybermen vanish and tumble through the Time Vortex, heading for Victorian England. If I

cut those 15 days, we'd be back on track. Plus, plus, plus... yeah, the thought of the Doctor

landing in Scene 1 of 4.14, just arriving, fresh and happy and unbound by continuity to

4.13, is rather lovely. New episode, new start, Christmas Day, off we go. And another thing

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This page: Scenes from the 2008 Christmas Special *The Next Doctor*.

Top: The Doctor (David Tennant) does battle with the Cybermen in Victorian London.

Left: Dervla Kirwan as the deliciously devilish Miss Hartigan.

Above right: Grabbed by the Cybershades!

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Above: David Morrissey (Jackson Lake) and David Tennant on location for *The Next Doctor*.

Left: Operation Cobra is GO-GO-GO!!! David Tennant announces he is to leave *Doctor Who* – live on ITV1.

Below: The Brigadier (Nicholas Courtney) and Mrs Wormwood (Samantha Bond) return to the world of *Doctor Who* in *The Sarah Jane Adventures* Series Two.



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Above: The deserts of Dubai make a stunning backdrop for the first of 2009's Specials, *Planet of the Dead*.

Left: David Tennant is joined in Dubai by Michelle Ryan as Lady Christina De Souza – along with a very badly dented London bus.

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Top: The cast and crew in sandy Dubai.

Above: Michelle and David enjoy the heat...

Right: ... while the Doctor and Christina generate some heat of their own.

Below: Russell and Benjamin embark on their book tour to promote *The Writer's Tale*.



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Above: Jack (John Barrowman) and Ianto (Gareth David-Lloyd) take a stand against the 456 in *Torchwood: Children of Earth*...

Right: ... but it leads to tragedy when Ianto is killed.

Below: 'Smokey the Space Pelican' is made ready for filming.



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This spread: The beginning of the end for the Tenth Doctor in *The Waters of Mars*.

Above: Trouble for the Doctor on the red planet.

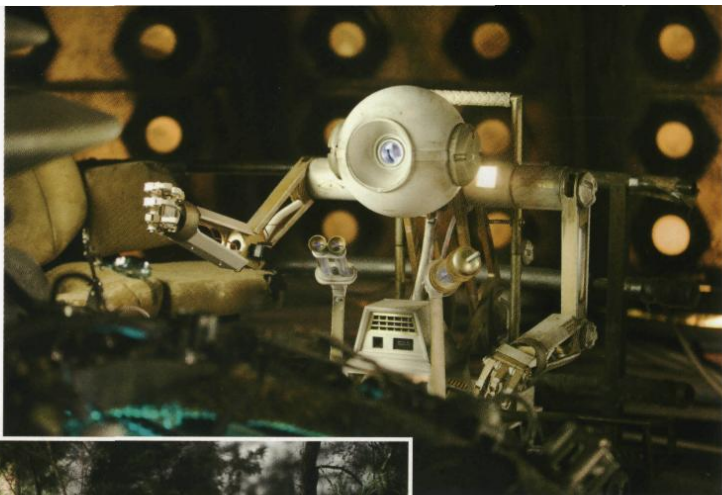
Right: Lindsay Duncan as Adelaide Brooke.

Below: Terrifying Water Monsters run amok on Bowie Base One.



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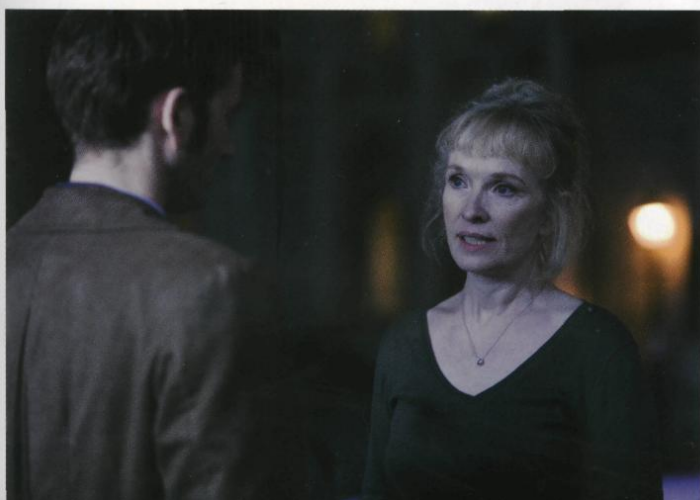


Above: Gadget gets to grips with the Doctor's TARDIS.

Left: A pair of Water Monsters dry out between takes.

Below: An emotionally charged final confrontation for the Doctor and Adelaide.

Overleaf: We glimpse a darker Doctor at the end of *The Waters of Mars*.



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-- I've been thinking about this a lot! -- confronting the bride and the Titanic was fun, but

Text message from: Russell

Sent: 26-Mar-2008 14:06

Benjamino! I just talked Julie through changing the end of 4.13 - no cliffhanger, no Cybermen, run a trail instead - and she likes it! I told her it was my own idea, so ha! I hope that script gets a 10/10 from you now...

Text message from: Ben

Sent: 26-Mar-2008 17:25

Much better! Yes, it's a 10/10 episode now.

Text message from: Russell

Sent: 26-Mar-2008 18:25

You and this correspondence have changed the script! The whole ending to the series! Now the world is going to spin off its axis. Beware the power,

Ben.

Power corrupts! No, but seriously. Thank you. See you later.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2008 10:10:45 GMT

THAT'S A WRAP

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2008 10:28:14 GMT

RE: THAT'S A WRAP

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2008 10:31:45 GMT

RE: THAT'S A WRAP

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SATURDAY 29 MARCH 2008 10:34:02 GMT

RE: THAT'S A WRAP

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time to slump yet.

It's a stupid life sometimes. It's a Saturday night, and I'm sitting here all alone, **RE: THAT'S A WRAP** staring at FX sheets, at midnight. (And we're about to lose an hour at 2am!) It's a weird You're right, they're glowing. Lots of TV covers and photos. Plus, with The Observer, sort of quiet, passive, sexless life. Half-lived. On Saturdays, you can't help thinking of free bar of chocolate. Nice. everyone else getting laid... but I'm just sitting here. Like so many Saturdays. It's like

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 31 MARCH 2008 00:31:42 GMT my obituary could say, 'He sat and typed.' I should spend my money. I should close

down this computer, and go to New York. Right now. I could work on the FX cuts in **RE: THAT'S A WRAP** a Manhattan diner. I could just fly off and do it. The hand of Visible Ben has reached out... and done good! This is the rewrite of 4.13

But I never do.

--

Christ, that's gonna make people cry -- and a brand new opening to 4.14. With your

fingerprints!

I'm channelling Visible Ben. Good rewrites. Not just your bit! The whole **FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 30 MARCH 2008 00:03:32 GMT**

episode

is six pages shorter, minus 220 FX days, and I swear you won't notice a thing **RE: THAT'S A WRAP** has gone. Good. I'm happy with that. So, why don't you? What stops you getting up and leaving? Why don't you do more

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 31 MARCH 2008 02:42:00 GMT with your money? Fly off to New York!

RE:

THAT'S A WRAP **FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 30 MARCH 2008 00:15:00 GMT**

I just

recounted my FX shots. I haven't lost 220. I've lost 190. Bollocks, arse,

mathematics,

shit. **RE: THAT'S A WRAP**

I've a nasty suspicion that, fundamentally, I think I don't deserve it. Hmm. There now, all this late-night introspection is making me glad to turn to FX lists. Thank you,

until now. Doctor Who 4.10 had been called River's 6 Up
Run. Benjamino! 7

The little-girl custodian of 'Girl's World' is known by the acronym CAL (her real name being Charlotte Abigail Lux) and

appears

in The Library as a Node, a robot-like drone with Charlotte's human face.

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THIRTEEN: WHAT HAPPENED NEXT DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 31 MARCH 2008 02:56:23 GMT

and
heartbreaking. But it's got its problems. It's a funny mix of linear and convoluted.

Mind
you, the end made me cry. I was sitting there thinking, DON'T CRY! Because RE:
THAT'S A WRAP

Now might be a good time to break open that free bar of
chocolate...? I knew I had the Q&A minutes after.

Best
of all, the mime sequence in Partners in Crime, the Doctor and Donna meeting FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL 2008 22:31:38 GMT

through
the windows -- that got such big laughs! Proper, big laughs. In all the right
places.
Building to that reveal of Miss Foster watching. Bloody lovely. That was my RE:
THAT'S A WRAP

favourite
part of the night, to feel a big comedy sequence click into gear in just the Blimey oh
blimey, Episode 13. The TARDIS flies the entire Earth back home! Then

right
way. (Of course, it did occur to me what a communal laugh that was, that itBad
Wolf Bay! Then the tragedy of Donna Noble! Even watching a rough assembly

could
be so unfunny watched sitting on your own. Ah, sod it.) When I first pitched(it
wasn't a proper Edit; we were just there to lock FX), Julie and I were crying. It's

Doctor
*Who, I used the example of all those gangs of mates and families sitting
around*gobsmacking. Hell of an Edit to go -- it's a sprawling beast -- but we've done
that

the
telly together for the Pop Idol final. Event TV. That's still what I'm writing.
I'mbefore. We'll make it magnificent.

writing
for group viewing. Maybe that's good, maybe that's bad, but it worked in that

But then I went and spoilt it all by having a proper strop, and chucking my
toys

cinema.
That moment was the best feeling I've ever had at a screening.out of the pram. I'll
have to apologise to everyone now. That takes longer than losing

I suppose it was a shame that there weren't drinks afterwards, because it would have your temper. I just snapped. I've been up since 7am, for BBC Breakfast, and then a

been nice to see people. Except, that's not true. You always end up avoiding the same Tone Meeting for 4.14, then the 4.14 read-through, then all the way back to Cardiff

old drunk idiots who can't handle their alcohol. So bollocks to that. for the FX meeting... and now I've got to do the rewrites after the notes on 4.14 -- not

big, but that's fiddly work, and it's my last chance to get the script right, by tomorrow
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 3 APRIL 2008 12:45:18 GMT--
and I missed The Apprentice. I know it's on iPlayer, but a stop's a stop. A full-blown

RE:
THAT'S A WRAP temper. I won't describe it. I'm too embarrassed. A lot of swearing and... oh, bollocks. A stop about what? (Missing The Apprenticed. No!!!) You don't have to tell me, if you'd I've come home knackered, and ashamed, and sick to the heart of this never-ending prefer not to. But it can't be that bad, can it? workload. While I'm typing this, Julie is e-mailing with apologies - like it's her fault! Wasn't the Series Four press launch magnificent, though? The madness of those- and solutions, and practical ways of solving things, and that makes me feel like even Adipose! Only in Doctor Who. The cradle sequence is so exciting on a big screen. But

more of a bastard. no Rose Tyler came, ha ha! That'll be a shock, when she pops up on transmission.

Tomorrow at 9am, I've got a big two-day meeting about Torchwood, in which I've I guess you're in Torchwood Meeting Hell now. Here's hoping that your brain hasn't

got to reinvent the whole bloody thing for five episodes on BBC One next year. I've turned to liquid.

got to be impressive - I've got to be - but I haven't had a second to think about it.

Pete Bennett (who's producing this series of Torchwood) is going to be there, for whom
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 4 APRIL 2008 14:59:20 GMT

I want to make it marvellous, and Euros (who's directing) will be there, for whom I
RE: THAT'S A WRAP

want it to be the best thing ever, and John Fay is coming, a writer I hugely admire and The Torchwood meeting was good. Poor lanto, he dies from an

alien virus in the corridors

who's only stepped out of a fantastic ITV career because he wants to work with me. of Thames House. In Jack's arms. I did try to convince them that it was a clothes-

I'm going to sit there like a dumbass, clearly improvising and bluffing, and actually I'm shredding virus, or it should happen in a sauna, but no one's on my wavelength.

ashamed of how little work I've put into this. Two days of everyone looking at me. Oh »A strop about what? (Missing The Apprenticed. No!!!)«

God. I am dreading it. I feel out of my depth. I wish my strop was about The Apprentice (I've caught up on iPlayer now - God,

Still, yesterday's Series Four press launch was fun, wasn't it? That Voyage of the Damned I love that thing). It was about... oh, everything. I was stupid. About my workload.

launch last year really was bloated. This one felt normal again, and manageable. Jane Script after script after script. For Christ's sake, I'm a packhorse. This year was meant

Tranter said she'd written a speech that was quite elegiac, because she was so aware that to be lighter; now it's a blur of work. We've been so busy that we've avoided looking

it was our last full series - me, Julie, Phil, David. Half an hour before, she chucked that « the terrible truth. I should have seen it earlier. I brought it all on myself. I'd already

page away. Wrong time, wrong mood, we're here to launch this, now, right now, and suspected that I might have to give away one Special to another writer - but only

that's all. Positioning! And I loved the episodes. Loved them! To be honest, everyone's one, the Easter Special, because I'm not missing Christmas, and certainly not the

going, 'Pompeii, Pompeii, Pompeii,' as they should, because it's loud, extravagant,

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
THIRTEEN: WHAT HAPPENED NEXT

regeneration -- but I've still got to storyline all five Torchwoods, and write at least one FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 5 APRIL 2008 02:22:08 GMT

of them... **RE:**
THAT'S A WRAP

There's only one option left: I give up the Easter and Christmas Specials, and go They can wheel you in, yeah? With dolly-bird nurses on either side. Like Young Mrstraight on to writing the regeneration this summer. That works. Back on schedule. But Grace.8 'You've all done very well.' Hey, Partners of Crime is on today.damn! We talked about which other writers to use for the Specials. We thought Gareth

Roberts for Easter, because that's a space-opera episode. (I really must update you on Text message from: Benall that thinking.) I've always wanted to see him write something like that. And Phil Sent: 5-Apr-2008 18:26Ford for Christmas, because he really is the most reliable writer of all, across Torchwood It's on now! The Adipose are coming! and Sarah Jane. He deserves the reward. He's saved our lives on the other shows, and

deserves a crack at the Big Show before we all depart. One possible problem: he's never Text message from: Russellbeen rewritten by me, which might be a sticking point. But he's a very nice man, so Sent: 5-Apr-2008 18:27I'm sure he'd be okay. And he's bloody good at nailing formats. I'd probably have less Ssh! He he.rewriting to do than with any other writer.

Damn, damn, damn. I'd have loved those Specials. Especially with a bit of time Text message from: Russellto think and recharge the batteries.

But what the hell. I'm so tired. Funny week. Sent: 5-Apr-2008 19:24Everything kicking me off. I think that's Launch Week. I get jittery. Or maybe it's I love that ending with Wilf looking up at the TARDIS. I think I got thatSimply that I'm properly knackered, and now with the added pressure of 4.14, every idea from your text this time last year, about children looking up at thetiny thing seems bigger. It's just me being temperamental. I don't think our e-mails moon. Now they can look for a blue box. Now I spend the rest of thehave properly gone into my temperamental side... well, obviously, since I want to night worrying about what the viewing figures will be.make myself sound good. I try to make the e-mails as honest as possible, but everyone

filters themselves. Text message from: Ben

Sorry, that was a bit of a rant. I might just sleep all weekend. Hey, new Doctor Who Sent: 5-Apr-2008 19:48tomorrow! The Rose scene! My mum says she enjoyed tonight's episode. That's all that matters.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRID AY 4 APRIL 2008 20:47:43

GMT

Text

message

from:

Russell

RE: THAT'S A

WRAP

Sent:

5-Apr-2008 19:53 You've just decommissioned yourself out of two scripts! Well, you've admitted that

My work is done. Good woman. I peeked onto the forums online, got your mind keeps skipping over Easter and Christmas and ahead to the regeneration

burnt alive - COMEDY!!! ARGHH! - and ran away. episode, so now you can skip ahead officially, right? Since you'll be rewriting the first

two Specials anyway, why don't you decide now, before you approach Gareth and Phil,

Text message from: Russell that you'll take a co-writer's credit? It's no use complaining after the event (which you

Sent: 6-Apr-2008 10:04 will, won't you?), when you feel that you're not getting the credit that you deserve.

Hooray, hooray, 8.4 million. By the time that's consolidated, that should be

than last year's Episode 1. Ha ha ha. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 5 APRIL 2008 00:59:06 GMT

RE:

THAT'S

A

WRAP

Text message

from: Ben I know what you mean about the co-credit. Talking of skipping ahead to David's

Sent: 6-Apr-2008 10:28 regeneration, Euros has agreed to direct it! Isn't that brilliant? We're so happy. David

Amazing. Especially considering the earlier start time. just loves him, so we're all excited. You've got to be on set that day. Book a seat now.

That'll be in about a year's time. I still won't have left this chair.

8 The

co-owner (with his brother, Old Mr Grace) of the fictional Grace Brothers department store, in British sitcom Are You

Being

Served?

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 7 APRIL 2008 23:08:23 GMT

RE: THAT'S A WRAP

I was mobbed tonight! MOBBED! I went to Johnny B's concert at the Millennium Centre. (He sang 'You're So Vain'!) The fangirls were out for Johnny B... and settled for me instead. They had to get security to come and save me. God knows what David's life is like. He has it all rehearsed: enters the auditorium after lights have gone down, runs for backstage as the lights go up again, Jennie Fava at his side like the perfect bodyguard -- it's amazing to see them in action. But what a life.

It was brilliant, of course. Fair dos to John, he is a one-off. He had 2,000 people in the palm of his hand. It was weird, though, sitting there watching him do his Captain Jack shtick. Julie and I were talking about it afterwards. There's David, soon to be Hamlet, Johnny B the unstoppable, Catherine with her stellar career, Billie who's just... well, Billie, and they're all doing Doctor Who. It's the biggest, most spectacular cast in the whole of the UK!

I'm going to make time tomorrow to update you on the Maybe. It's been lying fallow for a while. But vague ideas are storing up. You've seen how they can change, so it's a good time to make notes. (The Writer's Tale 2! Ha ha! How about it, Ben?) Problem is, my mind keeps skipping ahead to the regeneration, because I want it to be so magnificent, and I keep avoiding the two bloody adventures in between.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 7 APRIL 2008 23:29:21 GMT

RE: THAT'S A WRAP

The Writer's Tale 2? I thought you'd never ask.

You had me at hello.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE GREAT
WOBBLE

In which the Doctor boards the Starship Enterprise,

Russell spends £230 on a cake, and
Michael Grade waves a gun about

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 9 APRIL 2008 20:49:26 GMT

RE: THAT'S A WRAP

I'm so tired. I was doing ADR until 3am, and then had to get in a taxi at Sam for

meetings, meetings, meetings, and a Sarah Jane read-through. The day ended with

having to look at Sarah Jane costumes ('Yes, that waistcoat's lovely'), by which time

my brain was crawling out of my ears. At one point, I was so rude to Gareth with

Sarah Jane script notes (I sort of lose my filter when I'm knackered), I was saying, "This

scene's shit, you're writing shit, I'm reading shit.' Julie had to say, 'Russell, you're too

tired. I think you should stop now.'

I'm supposed to have written a treatment for Episode 1 of Torchwood by Friday. The

plan is to have me writing Episode 1, John Fay writing Episode 2, and James Moran

writing Episode 3, all simultaneously, with a continuing plot, so we've got to know

what each other's episodes contain. My mind is in revolt. TREATMENTS?!!! I don't

write treatments. I'm fighting myself. This is going to be an interesting day.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2008 18:55:46 GMT

RE: THAT'S A WRAP

Everyone else has just this second delivered their Torchwood summaries. I haven't

BBC Wales

“Doctor Who” Amended Shooting Schedule

(Issued: 07/04/08)

**Episode 14 Shoot Dates:
Monday 7 April – Saturday 3 May**

Producer: Susie Liggat
Director: Andy Goddard
Line Producer: Catrin Defis
Co-Ordinator: Jess van Niekerk
Designer: Edward Thomas
Chief Art Dir: Stephen Nicholas
DOP: Ernie Vincze
Gaffer: Mark Hutchings
Sound: Julian Howarth
Costume: Louise page
Make-Up: Barbara Southcott
Loc Manager: Gareth Skelding
First AD: Richard Harris
Second AD: Jennie Fava

This schedule is a guide only. For up-to-date information please see the daily call sheet and advance schedules contained therein. All artiste calls will be given by the 2nd AD.

written a word. I'm e-mailing you instead.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2008 19:06:28
GMT Maybe I should have been more opinionated today? I spend so much
time being nice

RE: **THAT'S** **A**
WRAP to people,
sometimes I think I'm a mug. Someone said the other day, someone who
You've got your priorities all wrong.
No. hadn't seen me for ages, 'You haven't
changed a bit. None of this success has changed
Hang on. Right! Priorities all
right. you.' I thought then, I'm a mug.
People should change in life. Isn't that the point? I

struggle
so hard to be liked that I retard my own development. Oh, I suppose that's my

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 10 APRIL 2008 23:43:15
GMT wobble. The Great Wobble spreads. I'm allowed one or two. But anyway
- Steven has

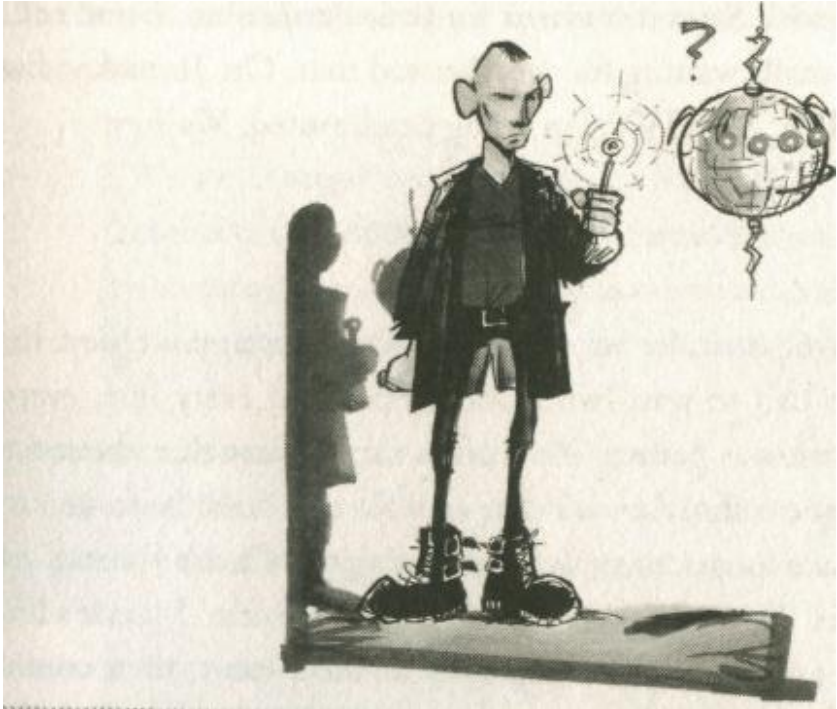
RE: **THAT'S** **A**
WRAP said that he's
starting to write Doctor Who next week, so that's David's deadline. That's so
I've given up on Torchwood. I'm having a mini strike. I'm watching Supernatural
on exciting, isn't it?

ITV2 instead. Those Supernatural boys turn me into a teenage girl. They're
literally In other news, the Torchwood meeting was good. I think and hope that
John Fay is a

sooo handsome. OMG!!! The other Torchwood treatments are a mess. We've got
so genius. He's truly exciting to be with. It was invigorating to be with a man
who pushed

much to do. I can't bear it. So much work. I can see ways to fix it all, but
sometimes me, and said no to me a lot, and was really inspiring. Further reports to
follow. I'll stay in

I feel like I'm this dumb story machine. It's not that I'm running out of stories;
it's touch from the frozen north. It's cold up here.



more like I've got too many of them, and too many solutions, and they won't stop

pouring out. I'm sick of it. So, I'm not going to do anything. I'll walk into the meeting
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 11 APRIL 2008 22:21:11 GMT

tomorrow and busk. Well, it's in London, so that gives me a train journey to work
RE: THE WOBBLE

things

out.

You can see

why Tom Baker ended up staying for seven years. This show is supposed

Did you know, they're not making an Adipose toy because -- get this -- they think
to be a rolling review, but you can't help becoming attached.

they won't sell?! I can't believe -

Oh! WAIT! Sod the Adipose. I knew I had something to tell you. According to Julie,
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 12 APRIL 2008 17:15:55 GMT

Steven Moffat has given David the weekend to decide whether he wants to do Series
RE: THE WOBBLE

Five or not. The thing is, David is thinking about it!
Look what I just discovered on my Manchester computer. (Yes, it's the sort of afternoon

where

I'm going through old files.) From July 2004, this is my very first drawing of a

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. FRIDAY 11 APRIL 2008 00:58:04 GMT
Toclafane!1 Back in Series One, when we thought we'd lost the Daleks and I had to

RE: THAT'S A
WRAP think of
something for Rob Shearman to replace them with, I came up with this. 2

Really? I thought it was a done deal. I thought David had decided.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 11 APRIL 2008 21:45:44 GMT

THE WOBBLE

Manchester! I've forgotten how to type on this keyboa5**(rd.

Everything is still in flux. I think David is just having a wobble. End of filming in sight, only the Specials, the size of Hamlet staring him in the face, then out of the blue an e-mail from Steven saying, 'Let's have a chat about the future.' That sort of wobble. That doesn't make it insignificant, the wobble could go either way, but we'll remember this as the Great Wobble. Or not.

I was on set with David this morning - he was about to battle the CyberKing from a hot-air balloon, like you do - but we didn't talk about it much. I'll just back him, personally and professionally, and help him no matter what he decides. Although... I can't

help thinking, would I have done a fourth year if I'd known that I'd be handing the Tenth 1 The cyborg Toclafane. human heads integrated into spherical, mechanical shells, appeared in Doctor Who 3.12/3.13. 2 The

estate
of Dalek creator Terry Nation, which holds the rights to the Daleks, temporarily blocked their use in Doctor Who Series

Doctor over to someone else anyway? I wonder. I could be long since gone. I could be far One due to a disagreement over licensing. The changed story for Shearman's 1.6 featured an alien akin to a child who kills for

pleasure,
an idea that eventually evolved into the Toclafane in 3.12/3.13. Ultimately, the BBC was able to secure the rights for the away, doing something else. But it's down to me to swallow that. Doesn't really matter. Daleks from the Nation estate, and 1.6 became Dalek once again.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
 FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE

They weren't called Toclafane back then, they were just Future Humans. And those always my favourite.' That closing moment, with Effie, reminding us of what's to come the sort of boots that I imagined Chris wearing. I love a big boot. No, don't reply. in Series Three. Oh, and the scene with Tony and Michelle in the car, where they break. Just don't. up without either one of them using the words 'breaking up'. Such brilliant writing.

The whole episode was about knowing when to stop, really. Knowing when to let go. They stopped short of depicting Cassie and Sid's reunion. They stopped short of showing us the abortion. They didn't hammer anything home, but let it be. Russell, Not much to report. Apparently, Steven is going to Cardiff on Wednesday to meet can you believe this is the same show that did a Carry On Russia episode in Series One? David. I might dress up as a waiter and eavesdrop. Yes! I shall become an industrial This finale was perfection. That is a fact. Yes, you should e-mail Bryan Elsley, and tell spy, much like Donna Noble. Or like Rose and Pete sneaking into the Cyberfactory: him. Give yourself away and... well, you'll be taken to the Cyberleader, and given plenty of time to destroy him! 3 Never got that quite right, did we? FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. MONDAY 14 APRIL 2008 23:48:36 GMT

I don't think there will be any more news today. Far more importantly, I'm trying to RE: MORE WOBBLING get my lift back to Cardiff brought forward so that I'll get home in time for the Skins You're so right. I loved that episode because it made me think. About when I was 18. Series finale. Getting those A level results - which was barmy, because my parents were away, so we'd

been having a two-week party in my house (I was that Skins boy!), and everyone was FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 14 APRIL 2008 23:19:47 GMT drinking wine for breakfast, and we all staggered off to school, got the results, then MORE

WOBBLING staggered back to the wine. Cheap, bad wine. I didn't drink wine for years after that. Oh, Skins! We'll hate Series Three now. We'll be Skins ming-mongs, insisting that it's summer. Oh, all those mates of mine! A lovely boy called Julian - blond, a dancer, he was not as good as the old days of Series Two. But I thought they were properly 18 years old like Maxxie. He died a few years later - so young. Christ, the '80s were strange. It made tonight. You can't often achieve that with teenagers, because their lives and dialogue me think of all that, for the first time in years. Quite apart from being a beautiful piece, have to be so thought out, in a drama. But tonight they were full of hopes, and dreams, of telly, that alone made

watching the whole two series worthwhile. And they really didand daftness, and spunk, and wisdom, and jokes, and tears, and everything. Wonderful. capture it - all the hope, the ambition, the fear, and the still-working-out-who-you-are.Beautiful dialogue just skimming past you. And Tony and Sid... oh, that was perfect. Funny thing is, after all these years, I'm not sure I can remember what my A levelSo skilled. I want to track down Bryan Elsley. I want to tell him that he's brilliant. I'm results were. Three As and one B? Two As and two Bs? Something like that. I'm in a jobnot sure I would've stuck with Skins if it wasn't for you, Benjamino. Good call. where I've never, ever been asked my qualifications. God, if I could have told myself

And now I've got 67 e-mails waiting for me. But sod that. On Thursday, I've lunch that at the time!with MICHAEL GRADE at THE IVY! I'm being headhunted. Wa-hey!

message from: RussellFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 14 APRIL 2008 23:37:40 GMT Sent: 15-Apr-2008 10:52RE: MORE

WOBBLING

doing the shoot for our book cover today, on the TARDIS set (I'mHere I am adding to your 67 e-mails, but I have to hand it to Bryan Elsley: that Skim dreading it), but I can't get Skins out of my head. How brilliant.finale was faultless. We've had to wait two bloody series, but every line, every scene,

every single bloody moment was perfect. How often can you say that about a piece of Text message from: Bentley? The car chase! With the coffin! Anwar's chat with Sketch, on the sofa, about friends Sent: 15-Apr-2008 10:52moving on. ("They just take longer to reply.") Jal's eulogy at Chris's funeral. That was Good luck. Don't let the photographer bully you.magnificent. The fireworks! Tony just nods and there are fireworks! Maxxie's line about

no one wearing pants in London. Sid leaving Tony at the airport, then coming back Text message from: Russellthrough the revolving doors. (Predictable, but so what?) And Tony telling Sid, 'You were Sent: 15-Apr-2008 17:11

photographer was rather good, actually. I looked vaguely human

not 10,000 years old. We have a cover!3 In Doctor Who 2.6, Rose and her dad, Pete, infiltrate the Cyberman Headquarters.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE

reassured me that it was still possible to do something meaningful, funny

LETTER TO BRYAN

in TV drama, and that these things can coexist, just at the point when 1This is the e-mail that Russell wrote to Skins co-creator Bryan Elsley a few was about to give up trying. It's hard to relate just what Queer as Folk meant to me, butdays after transmission of its Series Two finale, along with Bryan's reply... I'm sure lots of people say that to you. I just hope that isn't boring or frustrating, given

other fantastic work that you've done. It happens to be true, that's all.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: 8BRYAN ELSLEY, SUNDAY 20 APRIL 12:35:56 GMT All Next year on Skins, on Series Three, we're kind of pushing it out. All

writersHELLO me are under 23, and four of them under the age of 20. All the characters areDear Bryan, completely replaced with a set born from the imaginations of the young

I hope you don't mind me writing out of the blue. I cadged your e-mail address off creative team. The possibilities of going on our arses are too numerous to think about.a mutual friend of ours, Charles Martin. We'll be hanging on for dear life again. If you ever fancied coming by our writers'

But anyway, hello. I'm a writer too. I'm the Doctor Who man. I've always wanted meeting on a Wednesday afternoon and spending half an hour telling a bunch of kidsto meet you. I think you're brilliant, but now I've been driven to cadging e-mail how you go about things, we would be so happy. In the meantime and failing that, itaddresses, because I had to write and say that Skins is just PHENOMENAL. I would be nice to finally meet up at some point.bloody love it. I enjoyed the first series, but the second series just flew. It became We didn't get the BAFTA, of course. Quite a long evening when your award comessomething so rare, and beautiful, and wise, and funny, and brave, and mental and and goes in the first 45 seconds...new. Ending with a final episode that was just about perfect. Nothing's ever perfect! Best regards,But that was!

And I've got to say, the penultimate episode, when you took that dazzling, huge, brilliant leap to New York, was one of the most amazing things that I've ever seen. Reproduced with kind

permission! I've never seen a story take such a jump. I can't imagine how you even thought of

that. But it was lucid, and true, and heartbreaking, and I will never forget it.

I'm going to sound like a stalker soon, so I'll stop in a minute, but also I think
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 15 APRIL 2008 18:37:29 GMT everything you've done with that young writers' team is wonderful and shames the
RE: MORE WOBBLING rest of us. I read an interview with you, years ago, in the Sunday Times, I think, I'm only writing to make a promise, so that I see the promise through later. Tonight, where you spoke about new forms of narrative, how our TV-watching generation you're going to see the return of the Maybe. It's been ages. I've got to whack these is becoming outdated and the next generation will have new ways of storytelling. Specials thoughts down before they develop too far, or die. I just nodded, sadly. But then you went out and did something about it! You're an

inspiration.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 15 APRIL 2008 23:19:23 GMT

So thank you for Skins. Good luck with the next series. And good luck with the
RE: MORE WOBBLING BAFTAs tonight. If you don't win, it's a scandal!
I eagerly await the Maybe!

All the best,
are you going to David's birthday bash on Friday? I've got an invite, so I'll try

Hey,

Russell
to make it down. And have you seen The Sun today? Apparently, Jennie Fava is dating

David

Tennant! Where do they get this stuff?
FROM: BRYAN ELSLEY TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 28 APRIL 16:45:18 GMT

RE:

HELLO

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 15 APRIL 2008 23:27:48 GMT

Dear

Russell,

RE: MORE

WOBBLING

I'm sorry that it's taken so long to reply to your lovely e-mail. I've just acquired Jennie said, 'It says that I was at the John Barrowman concert! Now everyone's going a baby and it's 20 years since I had my last one, so I've had to be sent away for re- to know! And they'll think I actually am dating David!' Ha ha. Mind you, it's slightly education. serious.

Julie had to warn her to tell her family and everything, because reporters may

Anyway, I'm finally back in my office and just want to say thank you for being well turn up at her parents' house, track down old school friends, all that shit. so encouraging. It means a lot to me, because you're the writer who, a few years Yes, I'm going to David's party. Julie and I have bought the cake. For 200 people. It's

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That odd and small, but we've done a million sad departures. Imagine him at Easter, sailing would have been such a laugh. But my mind is screaming. Anyway - off, hooting at something, with the pilot left behind (voluntarily), hooting too.

We've three Specials: Easter, Christmas, and the 2010 regeneration. Unless David I've been toying with one other idea, a variant on this, although I don't think it works. accepts Steven's offer later today, and the 2010 Regeneration gets knocked out, in I would so love to see the Doctor on board the Starship Enterprise, puncturing all that which case we only make two Specials. Blub. But let's ignore that for now. Easter is Starfleet pomposity with his sheer Doctor-ness.⁴ When we began in 2004, Star Trek: very empty. This will probably be given over to Gareth. Julie is insisting that I accept a *Enterprise was still on air, and I told Julie, in all seriousness, that I wanted to do a Doctor* joint credit. She says it's necessary. It attracts guest stars. They expect to see my name *Who/Star Trek crossover. It was on our list of plans, until Star Trek: Enterprise was axed.* on the front of the script. But I'm still queasy. It'll look, in hindsight, like I didn't write (The crossover would have been so brilliant, though. In an official crossover, the Doctor any of The Fires of Pompeii, or The Satan Pit, or... well, most of them. would have had to learn that Starfleet is wonderful, but that's a small price to pay.) But I've

Since Easter is the only proper, standalone episode next year, I fancy something wondered ever since whether to do it anyway: invent a ship called the Endeavour, give it outer-spacey, wild and whizzy, spaceships and lasers. Lots of POW. Also, one proviso: a bridge, a captain, a science officer, a funny-foreheaded lieutenant, all of that... then let the time between shooting and transmission will be incredibly tight, so the script has the Doctor loose. Enormous fun. to have CG-only elements, with no live-action inserts, so that The Mill can prep and But too much fun? If it's not the real Enterprise, it starts to become a pastiche. I finish some FX while we're still shooting. In other words: spaceships. It was meant to these are my last stories, why waste one on Star Trek? Oh, but I could so write it! Sobe. I've always wanted to see Star Wars-type dogfights, two sorts of zippy spaceships could Gareth. It is tempting me. I wonder. Hey, are you Invisible Ben again now as racing against each other, battling, zooming, cartwheeling... and the TARDIS

we enter new territory? Or are you going to become visible? I like Visible Ben. But it's materialises right in the middle, and really gets involved. Like the wing of a spaceship

your call. (Hmm, does that mean I'm waiting for you to tell me that the Endeavour whacks it! The TARDIS tumbles through space, the Doctor inside getting jolted about,

idea is rubbish? Am I just begging that reply?) really funny, he's going 'Oy!', hits another ship, tumbles again. Taking a dogfight and

I've spent a long time wondering if we link from the Easter Special into the Christmasmaking it funny. Lovely Doctor Who subversion. Then an X-wing fighter screeches to a

Special

with a 'What? What?? Whaaaaat???' exit. (Yes, Ben, it's back!) It's unusual, this halt in front of the TARDIS - literally, with a screech of brakes, that makes me laugh

-- and talks to the Doctor over the scanner. Female pilot (this episode's companion)

4 The USS Enterprise is the name of several starships In the Star Trek science fiction franchise. Starfleet is the fictional

peacekeeping

armada of the United Federation of Planets.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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TALE
FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE

Easter episode, because I think there are going to be a lot of kids devastated that the show There's an echo of that old JK Rowling plot in here.isn't on again next week. Does a "What? What?? Whaaaaat???" ending help, or make it But how did Gran avoid the time-slip? And how do you sustain the Doctor and Granworse? I think a one-off, self-contained episode would be best, but I'm here to tell you the in hiding for an hour? The threat has to escalate. The aliens are only here to live out oneMaybe, so I'd better flag the other options. You could end with a knock on the TARDIS night in this magical suspended second, but if, say, the Doctor and Gran are seen, then door - yes, a plain old knock - and the Doctor says, 'What?' He walks to the door. It Earth is surrendered and becomes the aliens' home. That doesn't make any sense at all.knocks again. 'What??' And he opens the door... and there's HELEN MIRREN! Rather, it depends on witchcrafty ideas and language. The supernatural thread is really

'Whaaaaat???' very strong. Also, it needs to bring the family back into the action, somehow. Gran has

And we're into the credits. Because the Christmas episode, right now, is still that to be fighting for them, not just the world. Kids in danger. Brilliant. And Mum and Empty Hotel idea that I came up with last December, inspired by my night in the Dad. Do the aliens unlock them out of time once they know that Gran is a danger? Tofaceless hotel in Paddington, do you remember? And I think we could maybe get tempt her out? Something to do with a Christmas present? Like, whoever opens thatHelen Mirren if we planned this far in advance. She's turned us down in the past, but box is destined to... oh, that sort of thing. I just can't see it yet.always nicely, because she's been too busy, so we could try to lure her with this much The size of this! We have to make these Specials slightly cheaper, because they haven'tnotice. Or Judi Dench. Jane Tranter says that there's definite interest from Judi Dench. got a supporting series to amortise the costs. Julie is raising a good bit of money, as I'd love the Doctor with an older companion. Difficult to do too much running and she always does, but it's hardly the right time to go mad with scale. Still, however thatchasing, but... story ends, we definitely link into David's last story. Regeneration is on the way. He

So, the Hotel. Big, noisy, middle-class family, heading off to a posh hotel for stands there in the final Christmas scene, in the snow, by the TARDIS, saying goodbye

Christmas, a proper, huge, city-centre Dorchester-type place. Noise, noise, noise, all to Gran, having saved the world... then he sees, far off, through the snow, but staring

the way. Mum, dad, kids, their granny, all yammering away in the car, and as the at him... an Ood. And then it's gone. But he knows. The Doctor knows. He's being

porters take the luggage, then all the way up in the lift, spilt drinks, tears,

nagging, summoned. He must return to the planet of the Ood, because the end is near.
His song

get to the hotel room (two or three rooms, connecting doors)... by then, Gran
has must end soon. The Ood have seen it. He's going to die. (He doesn't say that,
but it's

had enough. Really fed up. Says something like, 'I wish you'd all disappear!'
Storms in the air.) Sad farewell to Gran. His final journey. Off he goes.

out. Goes to the ice machine. Corridors empty. Spooky. Creepy. A sudden wind
blows The Ood, by the way, are living in vast ice palaces now that they're free -
huge, carved

through the halls. Gran gets the ice, goes back to the room. Empty. All
disturbed landscapes - with an Ood Consciousness that is seeing through time.
They're filling in for

and messy, but no people. She goes downstairs. Foyer, empty. No one. Goes
outside. the Time Lords, in terms of being a higher race with massive knowledge
and authority,

Streets, empty. (At night.) No traffic. London, deserted. Nice CG shot of
Nelson's to direct and summon the Doctor. Good old Ood! Who'd have thought?
The Ood have

Column, Christmas tree, no people. So, Gran walks along, her phone's not
working, blossomed into the species that they were always meant to be, infinitely
wise and calm.

but she sees a police box, knocks on the door... ah
ha! I've got to read Sarah Jane scripts now. I'm not sure
I'll be able to return to the Maybe

Now it gets expensive. And this is really what's blocking me. Vastly expensive.
We've tonight, because I've got an interview with the New York Times tomorrow
morning, so

got the Doctor and Gran in an empty world, and he's as lost as she is, but they're
not I can't do an all-nighter. Ben, you're going to kill me!

investigating for long before creatures start to appear. Weird, spindly, eight-legged
creatures with human torsos, like centaurs. Except, in my mind, they're the
wrong

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008 01:55:03 GMT

size. They're small and creepy. They're singsong, strange and delicate. These
creatures **RE: MORE WOBBLING**

are the forerunners, the sentinels, of the aliens. They've frozen Earth for one second
in The Doctor on board the Enterprise, puncturing Starfleet pomposity with his sheer

time, to make it, for one night, their carnival. Creatures parading through the
streets. Doctor-ness. This is my favourite idea. (So long as it's not a simple Star Trek
parody.

This bizarre carnival procession, on a vast scale. (And this is just the first 15 minutes! That would be too easy.) If you give it a good story, and make the captain, the science

Christ alive! The Doctor and Gran are the only ones who are human. Everything else is officer and everyone real after the initial cheap shots (you need a few cheap shots!), and

CG, or at least prosthetics. I try not to worry about money, but that really is seriously make us care for them, then we'll get the joke and get involved. And you could give the

blocking me.) Huge, weird, bug-like creatures, with crowns, sceptres, slaves, robes. starship an Easter-y sort of name. In fact, the Easter Special is the 200th Doctor Who

The Doctor and Gran in hiding. Its all a bit magical. A sinister fairytale. Creatures serial. (Yeah, I counted!) So, you can call the ship Voyager 200 or Endeavour 200 or

who have come through a gap in reality. Not literally supernatural, but feeling like it. something. Or maybe call one of the crew Ash Wednesday. No? Please yourself.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE

But I'm not quite sure how you'd make the 'What? What?? Whaaaaat???' cliffhanger say, 'Everything has its time,' and the Doctor says, 'Yeah, but not me.' The Doctor's work. A knock on the TARDIS door. The Doctor opens it. It's Helen Mirren. That arrogance and determination to outwit death should become part of his last story, likewise wouldn't be much of a surprise to him, would it? Not really. Unless Helen Mirren was it really is time that he dies before he becomes too powerful. That's interesting. But playing herself! (She wouldn't be playing herself, would she?) So, you'd have to have I'm definitely off to bed now. Night. a line or two explaining that everyone's vanished - but that's exposition, when the

cliffhanger should be all about images. The newly regenerated Doctor! The bride in the FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008 23:05:47 GMT

control room! The Titanic smashing through the TARDIS wall!
RE: MORE WOBBLING

David met with Steven and Piers today at 5pm. They outlined Series Five to him. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008 02:30:43 GMT David said to Julie afterwards, 'It's genius, seriously, absolute genius... but I want to **RE: MORE**

WOBBLING watch it, not be in it.' In other words, he's letting go. The Wobble is steadying. The Enterprise is your favourite idea? I didn't see that coming. It is fun, isn't it? But I But other options are still being bandied about. It's like we've all had a Wobble, and that fear that the parody would be all-pervading. Even if I wrote it well (or if Gareth did, Wobble has sort of cleared more space, made us look at what we're doing in a new light of course), it would still look like a sketch. And yet... and ask new questions, because now we're wondering: do we make more Specials? Why

You're right about Helen Mirren, too. 'Look, it's Helen Mirren!' No matter what just three? How about a mini-series with David in early 2010, with Steven's Series Five and she's wearing, she would, by then, have filmed 4.16, so we'd have announced her new Doctor shifted to the autumn? Julie and I are seeing Jane tomorrow night in London - casting. She wouldn't be a surprise like the runaway bride. Damn. Michael Grade first! - so we'll try to make sense of it all then. But overall I think it's done.

One other idea: what if David has aged between his penultimate and final episodes? David has made his mind up, and so has Steven. The plan stands. The plan is good. It could pay off beautifully if the Ood summon the Doctor at the

end of the Christmas You know what? Steven is so lucky. A whole new Doctor ahead of him. Brilliant!episode, and then he steps out of the TARDIS in the 2010 episode... looking older! A

little bit of grey. A little bit tired. Like he did anything to evade that summons. He went FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008 23:12:37 GMTeverywhere, did everything, to avoid discovering his destiny from the Ood. He ran **RE: MORE WOBBLING**away. Travelled to the furthest stars. Got married. Broke his heart. Did unspeakable When will it be announced that Steven is taking over? If him and Piers are going tothings. All to avoid this. He will do anything to avoid dying. That fits in with the start looking for a new Doctor, word will spread like mad, very soon. Have you andwhole final episode. (How like a Time Lord, to live a whole lifetime in one week.) But Julie got a plan for that? You always have a plan.the Ood have waited, with infinite patience. He couldn't put it off any longer.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008 23:32:04 GMTFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008 02:45:19 GMT

MORE **WOBBLINGRE:** **RE: MORE**
WOBBLING

Well, there's half a plan. Rumour is that he's won the Best Writer BAFTA for Blink,But if an Ood appears at the end of 4.16 to tell the Doctor that his song is ending and that's announced in a fortnight or so. Well, I keep saying that we should announcesoon, isn't it sort of cheating to have him run, run, run for a lifetime? It's like that line it the day after. But I don't think anyone is really listening.that you like in Tooth and Claw, when Queen Victoria says that whoever owns the

Koh-I-Noor diamond must surely die, and the Doctor replies, 'Well, that's true of Text message from: Benanything, if you wait long enough.'

Sent: 17-Apr-2008 15:43

was your meeting with Michael Grade?FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 16 APRIL 2008 03:09:57 GMT

RE: **MORE**
WOBBLING

message from: RussellYou can go around philosophising with 'Everything has its time', and 'Everything Sent: 17-Apr-2008 16:06must die', and all that shtick,

but when an Ood says, 'It's your turn now,' you'd be First thing he said: 'Were you one of those people who wrote to me whenlike, 'RUUUUUUNNNNNNNNNNN!!!!' (I certainly intend to.) But I like that. It I axed Doctor Who in

1985? I said, 'No, you were right, it was shit; and he makes the Doctor so much more real. I should actually say that. Old King Ood should hooted! He was lovely. What a raconteur! A proper showman. Loved him.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE			

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 21 APRIL 2008 20:32:03 GMT
 empires and universes; why is there no one to save him? That's not overt, not at first,RE: **MORE**

WOBBLING but it's there. I love that dark side to David's Doctor. It's subtle and, because of that,Long e-mail. Beware. A lot to catch up on. so powerful. Gareth said in an interview the other month that he loves David leaning

First of all, Michael Grade said some fascinating stuff at that lunch the other day. He on the Radiation Room door, talking to Jack, in Utopia; that it's like there's somethingsaid, 'Do you know the difference between drama and melodrama? Melodrama is: I've dark stirring underneath. Yes! I love that idea. And there's that bit in The Doctor'sgot a gun, I'm pointing it at you, I hate you, I want to kill you, my finger is squeezing *Daughter where he's telling Jenny about the Time War, and he actually sneers at her*the trigger... and the gun jams. Drama is: I've got a gun, I'm pointing it at you, I hate for a second. It's magnificent. Terrifying! Something kept inside. After all, this is a manyou, my finger is squeezing the trigger... and I can't do it.' I think that's brilliant. And who has lost so much, and seen so many terrible things.he mimed all that, pointing his hand at me. In the Ivy! With all that ticking away, off he goes... and this is where it really becomes a one-

Funny thing is, it cropped up the very next day. Because the same difference applies parter. He lands in some poxy, battered little ship, creaking away in the middle ofto drama and science fiction. Gareth has written a Sarah Jane script where she meets nowhere. It's nothing. It's not a Time War, or the Master's revenge, or the realm ofher parents in 1951, but she knows that she's got to get away. 5 So, she drives out of Davros. It's tiny. Four people on board. A family. I'd love them to be a prostheticthe village, but the roads keep twisting back, space folding in on itself. She's caught family. I could call them the Prosthetix. (Not really!) All with blue alien faces. Mum,in a loop. Every path she takes brings her back to where she started. She can't escape. dad, son (handsome if blue) and daughter. They're stranded in the middle of nowhere.But the drama version is: Sarah Jane knows that she's got to get away, and she tries to All they've got is a leaky engine. This stupid, simple, daft bloody leaky engine is goingdrive out of the village.... but she can't. She knows that it's wrong, but she turns the car to irradiate the Doctor, and kill him.around, to go and meet her destiny. Thank you, Mr Grade! Quite apart from anything, This family isn't important. They're no one. The kids won't grow up to becomeit's nice to sit in meetings and quote Michael Grade. Leaders of the Universe. And that's the point: they're as important as anyone. But

Anyway. When we Maybe'd last, the Doctor had caught a glimpse of an Ood in it's a great way of bringing out the Doctor's growing resentment. 'You're nothing!

the Christmas snow and headed off to face his destiny. Now, since the Great Wobble You're no one! I give my life for you?!' He's bordering on 'Do you know who I am?'

of 2008, Jane has suggested making the regeneration story a two-parter. David is fine He should actually say that. It's the twenty-first-century marker for vanity. All this

with this, apparently. Quite when the second part is aired, I don't know. No one emerging arrogance, all his rage and fear, all his loneliness. To dispel that, he's got

knows. Jane was wondering if the whole two-parter could run at the top of Series Five, to go into the Engine Room. I'm sure he'll have to replace someone in the Engine

so it's a 15-week season. Two weeks of David, 13 weeks of the new guy (or girl)... but Room. Ordinary dad is in there, willing to give his life for his kids - but the Doctor

Steven has been talking about how good the gap between early 2010 and Easter will be has no one, so he's the one who steps in there instead. Because he's got to. There could

-- a few months waiting for an Easter resurrection -- and he's absolutely right, I think. be some sort of twist. In venting the engines, the energy becomes the Sun, our Sun,

On Friday, Julie and I told Jane our fears - which felt a bit off, because I felt like I was and so the Doctor's sacrifice creates the Solar System. Nice bit of grace at the end, a

talking on Steven's behalf. But it turned out that Jane had been suggesting 15 weeks as bit Terminus, and I never expected to be channelling that story!6 But also it's the only

an extreme solution, to open up our thinking so that we could imagine that anything option left, after the Terminus ship created the universe and the Racnoss caused the

is possible. She wasn't clinging to the 15-week idea at all. She more or less handed it Earth to form. I'm running out of things for the Doctor to create --

back to us, saying that she'd trusted us this far, and our gut instincts had always been Oh, what if it were Gallifrey? He created Gallifrey! I just thought of that now, typing

right, so she was happy with whatever we wanted to do -- we could play a regeneration to you. Nah, not as effective, is it? He created Space Men In Big Hats. Who cares? But

two-parter in January if we wanted. I DON'T KNOW! One episode or two?! Julie something like that. And then he's irradiated. Dying, gently. But there's one last thing

wants two. I'm not sure. Maybe writing this e-mail will help. that he has to do...

This is the one-part version. (Or one of the options, at least.) The Doctor - older, And I'll come to that after describing the two-part version, because the actual ending

tired, having lived that life in a week - arrives back on the planet of the Ood, and will be the same no matter which version I go with. The problem with this one-part

they tell him that his next journey will be his last. He's calm with the Ood, and version is that it's so small. That's deliberate, but you can't help feel the anticlimax.

understanding, but still... who the hell wants to die? And it's not fair. He's saved David's last story, Radio Times cover, all the press coverage... and he's saving the bloody

6

Four-part 1983 Doctor Who serial Terminus postulates that the Big Bang was the result of a jettison of unstable fuel from a

5 *The Sarah Jane Adventures* 2.9/2.10.

spaceship.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE

Prosthetix family! You're expecting The Ultimate Battle For The Universe, and what huge battle with the Doctor, but what's the actual plot? He can't just be battling theyou get is a creaky old cargo ship, filmed in oh-so-familiar South Wales factories. I'm Doctor. That's the worst kind of Doctor/Master story. (Well, no, the worst kind offighting the disappointment. My own disappointment. Doctor/Master story is when the Master has miniaturised himself by mistake, and needs

So, then there's the two-parter... for which I'd have to bring back John Simm as the someone to lift him out of his box... Dear God!)9 The Master needs some huge plan.Master. I said that to Julie and Jane, and they sat bolt upright! That was lovely, but Probably Earth-based. This feels Earth-based. I don't have to write it for a good fewworried me, because the Prosthetix family would never get a sitting-up response. Julie months. I could probably wait till August. That's four months away. But that doesn't feeland Jane went, 'Ooh!' I like an 'Ooh!' The audience should be going 'Ooh!' I've always like long enough to cook up a super-duper two-part epic. Or am I being a wimp? Maybeknown what I'd do, to bring back the Master. I loved him so much, I couldn't help but I'm tired. Then again, ever since our Great Correspondence began, I knew what wouldwork it out, in idle moments, just daydreaming... happen in The Stolen Earth. Actually, I'd kept that story up my sleeve since the first year.

You'd still have the Ood prologue, the Doctor leaving them, knowing that this trip It was always going to be my last series finale... and now I've been asked to cook up

will be his last. But then you'd cut to Lucy Saxon, in a women's prison. 7 Cowed, finale number two, and quite quickly, and it's like my heart is dying.

silent, beaten. She's quiet and withdrawn. She's had a nervous breakdown. She never I can't tell you how much I'm worrying about myself, and how much I'm worrying

talks to anyone. Maybe all the other prisoners hate her, because she's posh. (She was about the story. It's not a healthy start, is it? It's not a healthy start for a two-parter.

no story that I'm burning to write, yet. Plus, once I face the inevitable and get

the Prime Minister's wife)! So, she's led through the corridors, to the visitor's room,

down to the Doctor/Master head-to-head, surely I've played every variation on that?

where there's a journalist waiting to interview her. The mystery of What Happened To

could I do with the two of them that's new? That Series Three climax really did

Harold Saxon is still unexplained, to the public. (Also, this works as a handy update

every button. The Master, this time, would probably have to die and give his life-

for viewers.) The journalist is a middle-aged woman. With red fingernails, and an evil

to save the Doctor. But that's awful! That's the opposite of what he'd do. But

agenda. As she says goodbye, she slips something into Lucy's palm, with a cunning

the only variation left. Unless he could somehow do that unwillingly...? But how

glance at the bulldoze prison guards, her conspirators. It's the Master's ring!8 "Take care

that work? Then again, how could you ever run out of material with two such

of this.' Lucy is an innocent in this. She has got no idea what's going on. (Maybe the

characters?

journalist leaves the cell, and Chief Bull Dyke says, 'Now, have her killed.' There are

both the one- and two-parter would have the same ending. And this I love! I

wheels within wheels. Nah, maybe not.)

write this now. The Doctor is dying, but with only a gentle radiation shimmer

Night-time. Prison. Lights out. In secret, the guards come for Lucy. This regiment of

regeneration glow on his hand - so he goes on his last, private odyssey. He goes to

bulldozers. They take her down to the basement, where there are chalk circles and

goodbye to those that the Tenth Doctor has loved...

symbols drawn on the floor. It's as close to a Satanic ritual as we can get on the BBC.

Jack is walking across the Bay. He sees, a huge distance away, the TARDIS.

Lucy is made to kneel while they chant. This is the Sect of Saxon! His devoted followers,

Doctor, standing there. The Doctor salutes him. Jack is gutted, because he knows, determined to bring him back. If I could, they'd cut Lucy, they'd use her blood and

just knows, what this means. He salutes back. A farewell. Oh, this is going to make pour it on the ring, like she's part of him, genetically, if only because she had sex with

cry.

a Time Lord. (Not sure how to phrase that. 'You have known him' or something.)

to Martha Jones. She's with UNIT troops in some sort of abandoned factory,

Ritual. Power building. Huge FX extravaganza. Lights dipping, wind blowing, floor

a lone Sontaran. A Sontaran sniper. He's in a window, aiming his gun, got cracks open, smoke and fire, whole country shaking, and out of the firestorm steps

right in his crosshair. He's squeezing the trigger, like Michael Grade... then

Himself, reborn. (After that, I need the Master on his own. He's got to get rid of these

The Doctor is behind him with a mallet, having hit the Probiic Vent on the back

disciples. Maybe he drains their bodies, in order to become corporeal. And he kills

the sniper's neck. The Sontaran falls to the ground. Martha is unaware of this. All

Lucy. Poor Lucy.) Far across the universe, in his TARDIS, the Doctor looks up,
spider she hears is the sound of the TARDIS fading
away.

senses tingling. LOVELY! Now I'm sitting up. But then... ah, but then... a big

Ealing, Luke Smith is running along, running into the road. A car is coming. The
bloody blank. I have no idea. Well,
obviously, screech of
brakes! A hand reaches out, pulls him out of the way. It's the Doctor. Luke

off to fetch Sarah Jane. She comes rushing out of 13 Bannerman Road... but the

7 In Doctor Who 3.12/3.13, Lucy Saxon (played by Alexandra Moen) is the wife of Harold Saxon, aka the Master, during
his

tenures as Defence Minister and Prime Minister of the UK. Later, she shoots the Master, apparently killing him.

8 Having been shot by Lucy Saxon in Doctor Who 3.13, the Master dies, refusing to regenerate, unwilling to be the
Doctor's

prisoner. The Doctor cremates him on a pyre. However, soon after, a female hand with bright red fingernails picks up
the 9 This is the plot of 1984 Doctor Who serial Planet of Fire.

Master's ring from the pyre's remains.

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opens it. A lottery ticket. And the Doctor while
we're thinking that's how he's going to die... but he doesn't. He survives. Hewalks
away... back to the TARDIS, so tired, to regenerate all on his
own. lives. He's not supposed to live! But
then, in the aftermath, he does something tiny,

As he regenerates, intercut with Jack, Martha, Sarah Jane, even Donna, just
pausing something personal, like saving the
Prosthetix family from a leaky engine, or stopping

to look at the sky. So sad. As though they can feel it. And then, maybe, only
then, cut Luke from running out in front of a car -
and that's what kills him. He's saved the

to the Doctor #2 and Rose, in the parallel universe, as they look at the sky,
holding universe, but he keeps going, keeps
fighting, because he wants to save everyone. He

hands, because they both know what's
happening. dies
saving the little people. That's very him. A hint of arrogance, and a bloody great

And the Tenth Doctor
dies. dollop
of compassion.

have the Doctor hit by a bus or a truck. Yeah! Like Tony in Skins. Then he can
goBloody hell, I really am crying. Ridiculous! If it makes me feel that much, then
it's got visit Captain Jack, and Martha, and Sarah
Jane, and Little Miss Redfern, all covered into be good. I had to pause for an hour
there. That upset me. I'm such a bloody girl.
Oh, blood, and on crutches, and with one of his
eyeballs hanging from its socket. What dobut reading back this e-mail, maybe I just
answered myself. I should write the story you
mean 'no'? Hey, come back! HEY!!!!that I feel the most. Which is the one-
parter. »once I
face the inevitable and get it down to the Doctor/Master head-to-head,

Or is there a way of getting both? Can I invent a two-parter that has the size of
the surely I've played every variation on that? What
could I do with the two of them that'sMaster story (not necessarily with the
Master), but with the focus of the one-
parter? new?«Maybe that Prosthetix spaceship
isn't in the middle of nowhere; maybe it's in
the Last time, the Master was Prime Minister.
He was all-powerful. He was king ofmiddle of a great big nasty war, and you fill
the two episodes with that, while still the bloody
world. This time, can't you make him the underdog, pathetic, desperate,reaching

the realisation that it's all about this one little, unimportant family. Epic and scrambling... and therefore more dangerous than ever? Like Lord Voldemort in the intimate at the same time. I don't know. I seem to be stretching stories out of their *Harry Potter novels. Reborn, but vulnerable. He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named* was natural shape. By combining them, I seem to be losing them -- or maybe that's judging always scariest as that mutant-baby creature in The Goblet of Fire, compelling other them too soon. I should let that thought simmer.

to kill on his behalf, or strapped to the back of his victims head in The Philosopher's

Argh, one or two parts? What do you think, Ben? *Stone. (How nuts was that? Only JK could get away with it!) What if the Master didn't*

ENOUGH TYPING! Christ alive, sorry about that. want to take over the universe, but was just trying to survive - or is that not what the

is about, really? (He refused to regenerate at the end of Last of the Time Lords.

wanted to die.)¹⁰ John Smith, the Doctor's human identity in Doctor Who 3.8/3.9, kept A Journal of Impossible Things, in which he recorded

his strange and vivid dreams - actually memories of his life as the Doctor.

¹ Jessica Hynes (nee Stevenson) played Nurse Joan Redfern, John Smith's sweetheart in 1913, in Doctor Who 3.8/3.9.

1

can't tell you how much I'm worrying about myself, and how much I'm worrying

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FOURTEEN: THE GREAT WOBBLE

about the story.« Where do you think this insecurity
is I've been hesitant about saying this, because I don't
want you to think that you've

coming
from? interfered
or anything. I still love all this stuff. At heart, it might be the simple fact

that
I need something to worry about. Since the book is new, that's become my newFROM: RUSSELL
T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 APRIL 2008 09:03:00 GMT worry.
Also, if the job has driven me slightly less mad, isn't that good? It's healthier.RE: MORE
WOBBLING Everything
is a work in progress, so maybe I'm more aware of that process now. ByI've got to go to
London now, to appear in John Barrowman's documentary about keeping
the doubt, maybe I'll keep questioning, and get better at writing. That'sbeing gay.12 STOP
LAUGHING!!! Christ alive, my poor career. But I couldn't refuse all I want to
do, get better. I don't feel as burnt by the writing this year, so I
thinkhim. what

I'm lacking is the sense of victory, the having-survived-it-all. Which is the

Thank you for your 04:44 e-mail. I think you've just talked me into doing a two-
process, not the script.parter! That's not Visible Ben; that's Boss Ben. You
bastard. Or maybe I just worry too much. Talking of
which...

Must run. I'll write more
tonight. »it's too small for a
swansong«

I
haven't quite abandoned the one-parter, but I can feel it weakening. It's still AllFROM: RUSSELL
T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 APRIL 2008 23:14:06 GMT Options
Open, though. You say, 'Imagine pitching it to David,' but I'm only writingRE: MORE
WOBBLING to you
in depressive Great Correspondence mode. If I had to pitch that story as aThat was a day and
a half. I turned up, and Johnny B had no idea I was even coming! I beauty, then I
could. 'Deep space... one, tiny, helpless spaceship drifts along. Inside,suspect that we'll come
across as revoltingly Out Media Gays. (OMG!) He even high- the most ordinary
family in the universe... so ordinary that the Doctor's entire fatefived me at one point. On
camera. Oh, we're going to look gross. Plus, as a gay man, will hinge around
them.' All said in that movie-trailer voice!who wants to be seen sitting next to him? I forgot
to wear a sack on my head -- though Interesting thoughts today, staring at a
blank canvas with the Master: I thought, Ipeople may think that I
am. like him homeless. Just

for a bit. Great image. He'd have to hide, since everyone on

»Where do you think this insecurity is coming from?« Earth would know his face. I woke up this morning thinking that the best possible

Right at the start, we agreed that you'd be signing up to every neurosis, you poor, end to Part One would be planet Earth EXPLODING INTO PIECES!!! That's very poor bastard. So, here goes. Maybe the fact that I've got no full series to charge into Master, and a great thing to wake up thinking next is making everything feel different. I'm lacking that engine. Maybe it all feels It did strike me, standing on Paddington Station today, that of all the blank canvases faintly off-colour because it's ending. Except, I don't think so. It's not the series. It's me. to have, this one's a beauty. So, no panic. Yet. I keep wondering -- I can't help it -- whether this Great Correspondence, whether The

Writer's Tale, has changed the scripts, or my reaction to them. (Don't worry, I'm not

backing out!) Does opening up the scripts to you weaken them somehow? Did sharing them make me lose the loneliness of the job? The isolation? For want of a better word, the suffering! I told you at length, in those early e-mails, how this job drives me mad. Although I've had some bad times this year, none feels quite as bad as Series Three.

Last of the Time Lords drove me demented. If I could measure it, then Series One, Two

and Three were a ten on the Loony Scale. But this year, Series Four, feels like a seven. Was it writing to you? Did that take the pressure off? Did it stop being such a lonely job, and become a bit more fun?

Are the scripts less focused as a result? Or are they as good as they always were, and all I'm missing are the by-products, the angst, the secrecy of writing, the privacy, the proud and testosterone-fuelled feeling of I did this all on my own? Maybe writing to you acts as a safety valve, takes away some of the pressure, and makes me feel better.

12 The Making of Me: John Barrowmon.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

In which Beauty and the Beast is praised to the
skies,

The Matrix causes controversy,

and Russell receives a letter from Her
Majesty

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 24
APRIL 2008 23:14:0 6 GMT

HELLO

Sorry, I've been quiet for a day or two. Filming of The
Next Doctor has been mental.

Last night, they had about a thousand onlookers turn
up in Gloucester! It's a nightmare

for David, though he handles it so well. But I'm
knackered. Julie too. I wondered to

her whether we're getting slower. She said, 'No, we're
just exhausted.' We've been doing

this for five years now. Sometimes I forget.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 25 APRIL
2008 13:24:51 GMT

RE: HELLO

Russell! I just got off the phone to Catherine Tate.

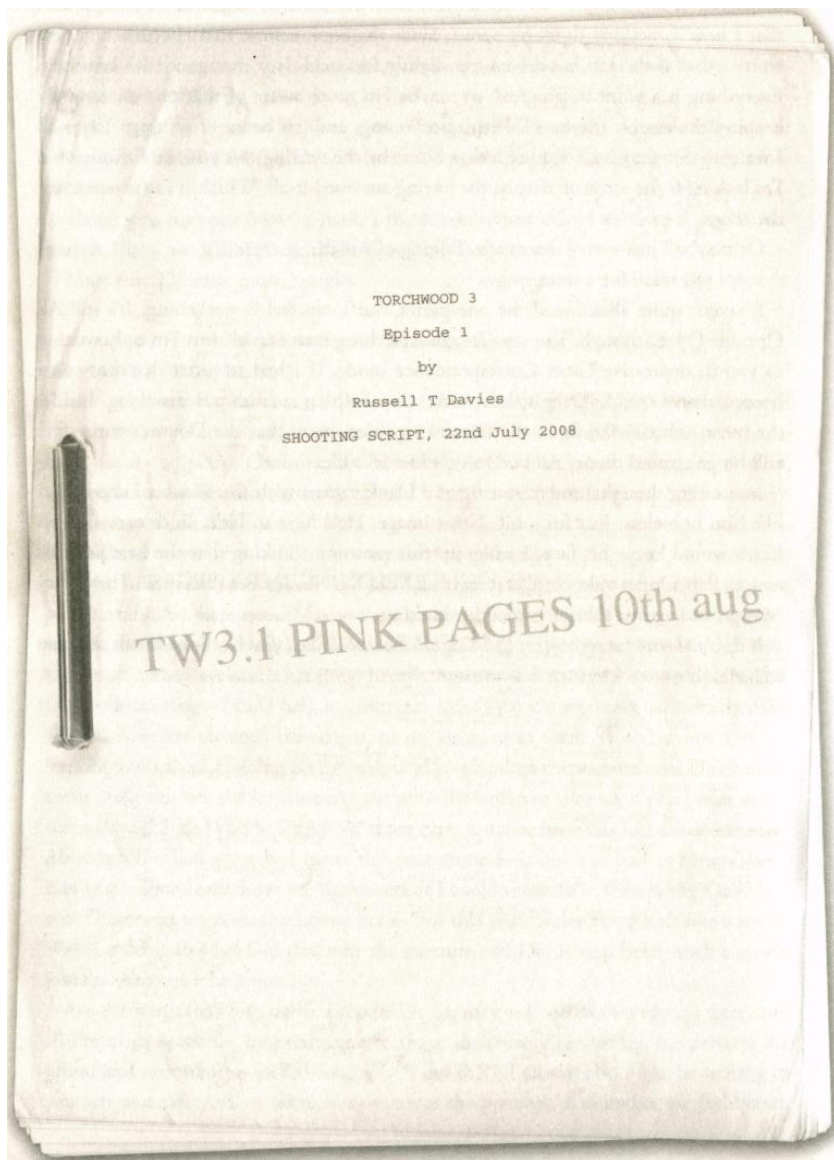
Lovely interview. She says that

*Doctor Who is now the job that she will measure all future jobs by.
How nice is that?*

She admitted that, had you all been doing another series, she wouldn't have hesitated in signing up for it.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 25 APRIL 2008 13:40:17 GMT

RE: HELLO



I am amazed that Catherine said that about a second series -- and gutted, because

O

imagine how incredible a second series with Catherine and David would have been.

But I'm hugely, properly, genuinely honoured. Thanks for telling me that.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE CHAPTER
FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 27 APRIL
2008 23:28:30 GMT to hear. (Andy Pryor, then Julie, then me, if
you're counting.) John is filming inRE: HELLO

South
Africa, but his agent phoned him to sound him out, tentatively, for returningHey,
happy birthday. Six Welsh BAFTAs for Doctor Who, and one for Torchwood-
not for David's farewell episodes. It was an immediate yes. He'll move
anything, cleara bad birthday
present. everything, to
do it. I'm so pleased, if only because when people say, 'Oh, I loved doing

Doctor
*Who,' I can't help wondering if they really did. But obviously it's true.*FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 28 APRIL 2008
00:05:55 GMT I had a vague Master thought this morning.
Standing by the tills in Tesco's, atRE: HELLO

10.45am,
I meshed the Doctor Will Do Anything Not To Die story with the MasterYou've
outed me. I'm 31
today. Returns story. I
thought, what if he really will do anything? What if the Doctor and

Yes, I'm just back from the Welsh BAFTAs. Good night. Steven was there, on
fine the Master team up? What if the Doctor is so tempted by an offer
of life -- or survivalform. I gave an award to Glyn Houston (I'm earning a fortune
from that Hand of -- from the Master that he begins to
compromise himself? I'm not sure where that's*Fear DVD!*).*11 made merry
with Gethin Jones. I told him that I loved him. On stage.* going, but it's
interesting.Out loud. Got a big laugh. I'll do anything for a big laugh. But thank
God I didn't tell Also, I saw a great edition of The Real Hustle on BBC
Three the other day (it was aanyone it was my birthday, or it would have been
unbearable. repeat, I think), where they warn you how
thieves and fraudsters operate... and it was

perfect
for the Master! Like, if you're dining in an open-air cafe, the thief waits
untilFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 29
APRIL 2008 16:42:13 GMT

your
glasses and plates are empty, then slings a towel over his arm, approaches the
table

like he's a waiter, clears your stuff, asks for your credit card, and then scarpers!

RE: HELLO

It's
amazing how people just handed their cards over. Imagine the Master doing that.

Here are some chapters of The Writer's Tale to read through - see attached document. I

He's
the ultimate modern identity fraudster. You get this fast montage of him, literally,
want to make sure that you're okay with all this being published. It's mostly
harmless,

building
up a new, fake life -- first a credit card, then he buys a suit, then he steals a
but you've got to be happy.

laptop,
through the laptop he taps into someone's bank account, next thing you know
he's
smart and rich, and he's catching a flight to Geneva. Yeah, Geneva. Geneva is

**FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 29 APRIL
2008 00:05:55 GMT**

lurking
in my head for some reason. I'm not sure why. It feels like the Master needs to

RE: HELLO

leave
the country. He'd know that the Doctor is looking for him, and it'd be good for

Exciting! I've got to go do podcasts and commentaries with David now - the
poor

this
showdown, whatever it is, to go beyond England.

man, they're packing his days full of every bloody thing, because he's leaving
Cardiff

In
other news, Samantha Bond has said yes to returning to The Sarah Jane
Adventures.

properly at the weekend - but I'll be back later. Can't wait.

Andy
Pryor's e-mail says, 'Mrs Wormwood lives!' Not camp at all.

**FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 30
APRIL 2008 02:32:40 GMT**

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 1 MAY 2008
12:12:01 GMT

RE: HELLO

RE:

THE MASTER'S BACK

Good stuff! Publish and be damned. It's weird, though, reading back our e-mails from

THE

MASTER... REBORN! Phenomenal news. I'm on set at the minute, on the

last year. When I read what I wrote about being so excited about the end of 4.13, BBC's wireless connection. David has been soaked for the re-shoot of the climax to

walking around the kitchen, banging things, ending up so happy that I sort of cry... 4.13- much better! - and now him and David Morrissey are heading towards a green

it's kind of horrific, but also fascinating. Sitting here now, quite calm, I have a hard screen, with wild looks in their eyes. More later...

time recognising myself. It's as though I'm talking about a completely different person.

I'd never have written stuff like that if I'd been doing a series of stone-cold-sober Essays FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 6 MAY 2008 00:58:38 GMT

On Writing. I'm so glad we did this.

RE: THE MASTER'S BACK!

David,

Julie and Phil are off to Paris tomorrow, to see Kylie in concert... with an

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 1 MAY 2008 11:51:35 GMT

empty

seat for me. They're staying at the George V, which is the poshest hotel in

THE MASTER'S
BACK! the city.

Bloody Torchwood deadline! Look, I've failed to even start the script before

Hot news, right this very second: JOHN SIMM SAYS YES!!! You're the fourth person midnight, and therefore I won't write anything tonight. Bollocks.

1 Glyn Houston played Professor Owen Watson in 1976 Doctor Who serial The Hand of Fear.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN			

Oh, but I'm interviewed in the new issue of Arena magazine. It's rather nice. It will spread, but should we Hold The Line and say nothing? David wants to hold out doesn't feminise me, for once. Mind you, I'm called a 'celebrity writer', which I can't until after Christmas, but we're all hoping to wait even longer, really. Top of the agenda deny, but that's pretty horrific, isn't it?! was that Steven is keen to be announced as the new showrunner as soon as possible,

and this will create a lot of David speculation. But we'll all just keep our heads down.

Text message from: Russell
It's worth it.

Sent: 6-May-2008 20:15
Also, watching 4.13 today (oh, it's good), we discussed how to end 4.12's mock-

I'm getting texted photos from Kyie's concert. This just isn't fair! regeneration. Full trail? After the titles? Close-ups of the other characters? I announced,

solemnly, 'I think it should end with no trail, only the words "TO BE CONTINUED".'

Text message from: Ben

That's your idea! Claimed as my own! Ha ha ha... oh, wait, now Julie is going to read this.

Damn.

Sent: 6-May-2008 20:26

Text them back one of you sat at your desk. Sobbing.

message from: Russell

Text message from: Russell
Sent: 6-May-2008 18:27

Sent: 6-May-2008 20:33
Julie has sent me home, because she says I look too tired. That makes a

John Fay and James Moran have delivered Episodes 2 and 3.
This man feel good. Sent home! Still, today's
Torchwood meetings were

makes me feel like a cheat and a
fraudster. exciting. (Alien: 'We want
ten per cent.' Civil Servant: 'Of what?' Alien:

children!')

Text message from: Ben

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 11 MAY 2008
15:26:00 GMT

Sent: 6-May-2008 20:35

Are the scripts any
good? RE: THE MASTER'S
BACK!

There's
nothing better than going for a walk in the Cardiff sunshine, and bumping into

Text message from:
Russell Gareth David-Lloyd. He looks
good. Yet again, that's one of those odd meetings where

Sent: 6-May-2008
20:36 I want to say, "We're going to
kill you!" I suppose only writers and hitmen ever think

For first drafts, they're
marvellous. that. But I can't tell him. It's not
professional, until everything is signed and sealed and

we
know that the scripts work.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 7 MAY
2008 17:29:22 GMT

Talking
of which, I'm so bloody dumb. You know that sequence I was envisaging of

RE: THE MASTER'S
BACK! the Master acting
out The Real Hustle, pretending to be a waiter, etc? Well, he's Harold

I still haven't started my Torchwood script... but this morning, walking through
the Saxon! Everyone knows his face! That hit me like a thunderbolt today. I
can't believe I

Bay, I said to myself, 'Stop beating yourself up about it.' So, I have! I feel much happier forgot that. D'oh! Oh well. I'm an idiot.

today. It's The Apprentice tonight. I'm just going to sit and watch it without worrying

about what I should be doing. FROM: BENJAMIN

COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 16 MAY 2008 19:16:22 GMT

BIG

ANNOUNCEMENT?

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 7 MAY 2008 20:26:47 GMT

Right, I'm hearing whispers that the Steven Announcement is likely to be next week.

RE: THE MASTER'S
BACK What's The Line,
then? 'RUSSELL T DAVIES QUILTS DR WHO'? 'STEVEN

Cue the sound of something far off going very wrong somewhere...

MOFFAT TAKES UP THE REINS'? Or is the Beeb going to try both?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 8 MAY 2008 20:11:31 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 16 MAY 2008 21:43:59 GMT

RE: THE MASTER'S
BACK! RE: BIG
ANNOUNCEMENT?

We had a great big summit today - me, Julie, Piers, phoning Steven, David and Jane No, it's all very positive. To celebrate! The future! I am but a footnote. Apparently, it's

-- about when to announce David's departure. Of course, stuff will leak and rumours going into Broadcast magazine this Wednesday.

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DOCTOR
TALE

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S

CHAPTER

FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 17 MAY 2008 23:51:59 GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 18 MAY 2008 23:09:35 GMT

RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT? RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?Russell! How's Torchwood coming along? I might ask Paul Abbott what he thinks. I can't help thinking that he must have turned

down
an OBE or two over the years. Maybe I've been offered it because my parents
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 18 MAY 2008 00:50:35 GMT once helped to abduct a spy. RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?

Slowly. Oh, so slowly. We've had this brilliant idea of blowing up the Hub at the end
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 00:01:46 GMT

of Episode 1, but sort of forgot to work out why. Small detail. I'll get there. At least RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?I've started. Look. Russell. You know what my next question is going to be. You just know.

But I won't send you this script. I'll spare you the grief.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 00:19:58 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SUNDAY 18 MAY 2008 20:45:06 GMT RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?

It was back in the '50s. My mum and dad were very big in Swansea Rugby Club, it wasOh. My. God. I'm just going through my Manchester mail their whole life (see how I've followed them?), and there was a visiting team from... er,I have been offered an OBE. here I get vague. Romania? Somewhere like that. My mum and dad could both speakHA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA French, which was the only language they all had in common, so they were enlisted asHA HA!!! translators. But then some men from the Foreign Office came to our house. They said

that
one of the rugby team wanted to defect, and it was 'in our interest' that he did so.FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 18 MAY 2008

22:33:06 GMT (Okay, I'm making up the 'spy' bit, but it's close!) So, they arranged the whole thing.**RE: BIG**

ANNOUNCEMENT?

One night, there was a big do for the visiting team at some posh hotel in the Gower.**CONGRATULATIONS!!!** That'll be for saving Buckingham Palace last Christmas.

At a certain time, my mum had to keep the blokes in charge talking, while my fatherTurning the Royal Family into werewolves in Tooth and Claw*. Not so much.

was instructed to take The Man out into the gardens for a walk and a chat, which he

did,

and then men leapt from the bushes, bundled The Man away, and that was that.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 18 MAY 2008 22:37:33 GMT Disappeared into the night.

RE:

BIG

ANNOUNCEMENT?

Ever

since then, to this day, my parents have received Christmas cards off the Foreign

Um... will you accept it? You will, won't you? Office. I only found this out because, when I was 13 or 14, I saw one of the cards and

said,

'What's this for?' I'm from a family of spies!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 18 MAY 2008 22:45:15 GMT

RE:

BIG

ANNOUNCEMENT?

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 00:20:19 GMT

I really don't know. I am torn. TORN! The 'British Empire', for God's sake! But it **RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?**

would make my father happy. He's 83 and blind. All the right reasons make sense - my You're in the wrong job, clearly. Writer? Pah! Spy? Oh, unless you combine the two.

father and my sisters, and this going to a gay man, and a writer - but I really think You are Jessica Fletcher, and I claim my five pounds.²

it's nonsense, and I'm not sure if I think it's wrong. I've never had to think about that

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 00:29:07 GMT

before. I never thought I'd have to.

RE:

BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 18 MAY
2008 22:50:10 GMT If I were Jessica Fletcher, you'd be dead by now.
Everyone close to her cops it. You'd

RE:

ANNOUNCEMENT?

police would notice. I once walked past Angela Lansbury at the BAFTAs. She

If it's good enough for Verity Lambert...
astorishingly beautiful.

BIG

think the

was

writer and amateur detective Jessica Fletcher is a fictional character (portrayed by Angela Lansbury) in long-

2 Mystery

American TV show Murder, She Wrote.

running

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE CHAPTER

FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 00:35:11 GMT Text message from:

RussellRE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?

20-May-2008 18:30She was the voice of the teapot in Beauty and the Beast, wasn't she? 'Off to the cupboard I'll update you by e-mail later tonight (By tomorrow, everyone willwith you now, Chip. It's past your bedtime.' Amazing. have forgotten who I am.)

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 01:06:23 GMT Text message from: BenRE: BIG

ANNOUNCEMENT? Sent:

20-May-2008 18:44*Beauty and the Beast was my best experience in a cinema ever. (No, stop!) I went along to* Perhaps it's time to wear a name badge. It'll help them identify youa Manchester cinema on a Tuesday afternoon, ages after it was released, and I was the only when you sign on.person in the auditorium. That's how films should be seen. It's so liberating. I laughed, I

cried, I cheered when all the furniture decides to fight. Plus, it's easily the best Disney film.

I've seen it dozens of times. I love it. It's sacrilege to say so, but that golden period of the FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 21 MAY 2008 00:49:51 GMT

late '80s to the '90s produced the best Disney cartoons of the lot. RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?

And what about The Little Mermaid! It's beautiful. Really, truly beautiful. I've even got So, blimey. Today. It was all a bit rushed at first, because the press release was meant toan Ursula mug somewhere (with the words 'I'm a very busy woman')!3 Best thing about go out on Thursday, but The Guardian got a whiff of what was going on, and startedthat film? You cannot see where the happy ending is coming from. They all look doomed, chasing Steven, so we rush-release it. And then... well, nothing. Honestly! I betthe world is ending, all those ships are stirred up from the ocean floor... and then about Steven is being bombarded, but I've carried on as normal. I've had all of two e-mailssix seconds before it happens (honestly, I timed this on the video once), you see the sharp and three texts. Two of those texts were from you! Oh, and my father thinking I'mprov of a ship turning round and heading for Ursula. Completely out of the blue... and unemployed. And it was on the eight o'clock BBC One

news summary. That's very yet it's the shipwreck in which they were playing in the very first scene. Oh, that's clever. mad. Producers on the news! Phil Collinson phoned up, because he was in the gym

with
headphones on, and saw my face flash up on BBC News, and he thought I was
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 01:10:04 GMT
dead. I told him, in that event, all channels will go to black.
RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?

But
I don't really feel anything. In my heart, right down deep in my heart... nothing. Yeah, The Little Mermaid is inspired. That scene where the Little Mermaid's father, I wish it felt like more, really. But it doesn't. Just a slight dismay that a lot of reports are Triton, is all alone, having lost his daughter, and he says in that deep, echoing voice, calling it 'DAVIES LEAVES' instead of 'MOFFAT STARTS', but what can you do? 'What have I done...?' God, I love that film. So few people like this stuff. No, that's Oh, and five seconds of fury, because a blog on Media Guardian says that I made then not true. So few people admit to liking this stuff. Even Disney executives, I think. show 'too childish, too camp, and too gay'. TOO GAY? What the hell does 'too gay'

mean?
Seriously? You'd expect that from the Mail, but this is The Guardian. Still, that's
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 01:13:50 GMT
the nature of blogging. No Standards Required.
RE: BIG ANNOUNCEMENT?

I
have, however, been singing Beauty and the Beast songs to myself all day. The!t's the songs, stupid! A few years ago, they decided to make their cartoons with less villagers sing, 'We don't like / What we don't understand / In fact, it scares us...' Major songs... resulting in song-less, joyless, jokeless, sing-along-less films, nowhere near as psychology in two lines of a song. Ahh, Disney. loved as those classics.

ROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 22 MAY 2008 19:26:47 GMT

Text message from:
Ben RE: FW: DOCTOR
WHO

Sent: 20-May-2008 18:06
Oh dear. We've hit a sudden, screeching halt on Torchwood, because Freema might not be
The Steven Announcement was today?! I've just read it! How's it gone

for available after all. Law 6- Order: UK (loving that colon)
wants to cast her in a lead role.

you? History in the making and all that. Or has it all been a bit
anticlimactic? That's a brilliant headhunting swoop from Richard
Stokes and Chris Chibnall. They've

moved
straight from Torchwood to Law 6- Order, and they've pounced on Freema. Good3
Ursula the sea witch is 77ie Little Mermaid's chief antagonist.

move.
Clever move. Can't blame them. Bless Freema. It's 13 episodes! On ITV! (cont p396)

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DOCTOR
TALE
FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S
CHAPTER

MISS JONES

JACK

You
calling me provincial? This sequence from Russell's first draft of Torchwood:
Children of Earth,

1, features Martha Jones. Actress Freema Agyeman had, at one
Well it's Cardiff, isn't it? stage, been pencilled in for the full
series, but proved unavailable, so this

JACK cameo - ultimately unused - was written
instead. I keep telling you. Hand in that badge! Come
and work

So, it's a Monday morning. At 8.40am, every child in the world
just with us. stopped - stopped in their tracks - for one
minute, before continuing as MARTHA going to the window, pulling back
the blinds... though nothing had happened...

FX: MARTHA
set against DMP of NEW YORK, at sunrise.

33. INT. MARTHA'S FLAT - DAY

MARTHA JONES - just dressed for work, going round picking
up Yeah, like I'm really gonna move to South Bales, r. now.
keys 4 papers, busy, while on the mobile -

JACK

MARTHA How's
Tom? 1
- there's a UNIT Captain in Washington, Steve Davy, he's
got a son and a daughter, he took them in for
testing. MARTHA
Blood tests, sugar levels, that sort of thing, they even He's

good, yeah. You'd better come across for the

checked for radiation -
wedding.

CUT

TO: CAPTAIN JACK

Oh, I

don't want to start a fight. He is so jealous of

34. INT. TORCHHOOD HUB, JACK'S OFFICE -
DAY me.

INTERCUT with Martha, sc.33. CAPTAIN JACK
on IANTO pops into the office.

his
phone.

You

were right! He's back!

CAPTAIN JACK

JACK

He let them experiment on his kids? Nice man. I like

him. lanto

Jones just walked into my office, naked.

MARTHA

They're not experiments, they're tests. And they
found Martha, he's such a liar!

nothing. No traces of anything.

CAPTAIN JACK

Tell

him hello from me!

Can you send me the results?

JACK

MARTHA No

need. There's nothing to show. Speak to
you later - and keep me informed, yeah?

CAPTAIN

JACK

MARTHA

Will do,

see ya -

...Martha Jones, are you pulling rank on me?

Jack hanging

up, crossing to lanto, both heading out -

MARTHA

If

I

have

to.

JACK

(beat)

What's

he doing?

Look, this is worldwide. That puts DNIT in charge. It's

not. one of yours, Jack, Torchwood's more...

1 Thomas

Milligan appeared in Doctor Who 3.13. Sn Series Four, it was revealed that he has become Martha's fiance.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

IAN TO

Waiting, Exactly like you said,

now, while cooking steak (yes, Wednesdays are all about steak and The Apprentice),

TO: I couldn't resist peeking at the first few pages. The Hub blows up!4 I know you said that

were going to destroy the Hub - but right at the top of the series? And we see it from

35. INT. TORCHWOOD HOB - CONTINUOUS JACK & IAN TO heading for

outside? That's going to be expensive. But what an incredible opening.

a terminal, GWEN at her computer.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 2008
23:09:01 GMT

IAN TO

He's been there for 20
minutes,
SORRY! RE:

Damn. I just had a tuna sandwich.

GWEN

thank you. For accepting the script. I do like that central idea of aliens

Who has. . ?

through children. That's creepy.

Gwen crossing to join them -
Someone

rang me during The Apprentice. Can you believe that? I was so cross, I

to answer the phone instead of ignoring it, just to tell them to sod off. But I'm

ON SCREEN: CCTV FOOTAGE, HIGH ANGLE of Roald Dahl Plass. And

standing there... RUPESH.-
glad

Lee won.5 Good old Lee. Rugged Lee.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 12 JUNE 2008
14:42:44 GMT2 Rupesh Patanjali (played by Rtk Makarem) Is a doctor
from Cardiff's fictional St Helen's Hospital. Captain Jack considers

hiring him as Torchwood's new medical
officer. RE:

SORRY!

morning was the Dub for Episode 12. It is the most magnificent, bollockingA huge
transatlantic crossover! But, but, but... unless that's solved tomorrow, which
is mental, bloody wonderful extravaganza ever seen on
screen. That is a fact. It's likeunlikely, that leaves our Torchwood scripts in disarray. Ah, the
show that lurches from having chocolate, and whisky, and
steak, and cigarettes, while making love to a pornemergency to emergency. (We're hoping
that Freema will still be free for a few days on star on a

luxury yacht in outer space. Dear God, it's brilliant. And you know what?*The Sarah Jane
Adventures. Have I told you that? Martha and Sarah Jane battling
Mrs*

The best bit is your idea to end with no trail, only
'TO BE CONTINUED'. The threeWormwood and a Sontaran in the series
finale!) words slam
in, one at a time, in big gold lettering, TO! BE! CONTINUED! We rose

In other news, Steven and I were both in Broadcasting House today. The Two
Who up from our seats and applauded. We really
did. What a great idea.Rule. It's lovely, actually. If there's a problem or a decision or a press
release, I can turn

to him and say, 'Up to you.' The
relief! FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 12 JUNE 2008
15:36:20 GMT

SORRY!FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 11
JUNE 2008 20:45:43 GMT »The best bit

is your idea« Yes, it's
allSORRY!

My work here is done.I can't stand it. I simply CAN'T STAND IT.

I can't not send you a script! It's been driving me mad. I've spent a ridiculous
amount FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T

DAVIES, FRIDAY 13 JUNE 2008 15:54:05 GMT

of time thinking about the not-sending. I'm not kidding. I've been closing down
the RE: SORRY!script every night and feeling like

there's something missing. So, it just makes life easier You're an
OBE! It's been announced! It's in the papers, so it must be true. It had better go tofor me if I
send you this bloody Torchwood script. I am sorry. I told you that writers

were your head - I want an opportunity to turn to you and say, 'Oh Russell, you've changed.' creatures of habit and superstition, and now you're hardwired in. God help you. You

don't even have to read it. Honestly. Even if you do read it, you don't have to like it.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 13 JUNE 2008 16:10:59 GMT

I really am sorry. I hate to lumber you. It won't be for life. (Or if it is, have me killed.)

RE: SORRY!

it's the OBE news. My phone is ringing, and ringing, and ringing. Of course, inFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 11 JUNE 2008 20:52:19 GMT

In Russell's original draft, the final scene of the episode - in which Gwen bursts out of the Torchwood Hub, running for herRE: SORRY!

as Roald Dahl Plass explodes - was placed at the beginning of the episode, before cutting to the titles, then picking upNever worry about sending me scripts! Of course I love reading them. How could I not? the story from 24 hours earlier.

Lee McQueen, an IT recruitment sales manager from Princes Risborough, who won Series Four of The Apprentice.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN			

amongst the ringing phone calls, there are my sisters. I'd forgotten to tell them. I really the Master is infiltrating the place, the Doctor hot on his heels - and then somehow terrible at this family lark. No, I haven't changed at all. this technology, whatever it is, needs to be transmittable. Or made transmittable by the

flick

of a switch, by the Master. This is the point. He puts himself into the machine. HeFROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 14 JUNE 2008
11:07:23 GMT transmits himself. Every single person on Earth falls to their knees. Their faces judder,RE:
SORRY! fast,

like that Jacob's Ladder effect, all blurred and violent as they change...I'm only writing because at about 9.20am, I had a Very Good Idea... but I have to go When they look up, EVERY SINGLE PERSON IS THE MASTER!!! He transmitsto London now, so this e-mail is just a marker. I'll tell you when I get back. I've been himself into the human race. Everyone looks like him. Everyone is him. Men, women,puzzling for weeks now, what does that Master actually do when he returns? What's kids -- all the Master. The human race becomes the Master. All six billion of us. FX shotthe most gobsmacking plan? He conquered the Earth for a whole year in Series Three, of hundreds of John Simms, all in the clothes they fell down in. Women, too! Johnso how the hell do I top that? It's been driving me mad. I've been surly with Jane and Simm in drag! But the kids would still be little. They would be small John Simms.Julie - and you! - for wanting him back, because I can't think of a scheme grandiose Teenagers as John Simm. A baby in a pram?! The Doctor runs into the street, andenough. And then, today, I did. It's a rare 'where do you get your ideas from?' notion everyone is the Master -- with the Master's consciousness, I suppose. (Or would they?that just popped into my head, and made me very happy. I'm so excited. What if they remain themselves, mentally? That's tempting. But difficult. They'd just

go

bonkers. It needs to be a world full of Masters, not a world full of people freakingFROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 13 JUNE 2008
15:54:05 GMT out.) The Doctor's beloved race becomes his arch enemy. The faces! All those faces!RE:
SORRY! Soldiers marching, all John Simm. Families together, all John Simm. Streets full ofAnother cliffhanger! You always do this. You were born to be a dramatist. I bet there is John Simm. It's the most striking image. It's nightmarish.no London trip. You're goading me. (It's working.) I await your return from 'London'. It's very Being John Malkovich, of course. But I only thought of that comparisonI am gnawing my own arm off in anticipation. By tomorrow morning, all I shall have afterwards. I was thinking along the lines of: the Master enslaves the human race,left is a

stump.

he projects

himself into them, mind control to the nth degree, so they all become

his

slaves, all mentally controlled by him... no, boring, but... hold on, he projects
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 14 JUNE 20 08
11:07:23 GMT

himself into them... and those words sort of triggered the
image of the faces. OfRE:

SORRY!

course,

it's an FX nightmare. Any scene with a human in, after that, becomes a multi-So, right,
anyway: what the hell does the Master do? For ages, I thought, blow up the green-
screen extravaganza. (Imagine how many days John will have to spend on greenEarth in the
cliffhanger. Modern-day Earth, gone! But, hmm, no. It's always going to be screen!)

That's where those harmless aliens become handy, because we might need tore-created, isn't
it? You don't really believe that. (Maybe you do, if you're eight years old. get off-world
pronto. Anyway, all those problems to come -- and I suppose it still hasI haven't completely
discounted that yet. It could happen somewhere.) Then I spent the inbuilt
problem that of course it'll be switched back at the end. But so what? It'sa long time thinking
about body-swapping - so the Master becomes the Doctor and worth it, to see
that nightmare image. It's worth it to see the Doctor's face, never mindvice versa, which
would give us Evil David Tennant. That would be fantastic, especially the Master's.in
his swansong. But again, it's predictable. And they'd only end up swapping
back.

Right. Torchwood. Prep starts in 15 hours!Also, in David's swansong
(why is it called a swansong?), I want to see the Doctor, not

an evil version. I want him in all his wonderfulness, centre-stage. Plus, I've done
body

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 15
JUNE 2008 18:57:17 GMTswaps in New Earth. So, what, what, what?! What brilliant,

new, amazing plan could RE: **SORRY!**the Master come up with? Yesterday, bolt
out of the blue, I thought --

I

don't know which bit of your e-mail to reply to first! But I think I'll go with:

Well, I thought of the end bit first, and then added what must vaguely happen

»John

Simm in drag! < beforehand, so... we're on Earth. There's some sort of science project
researching

No,

no, I won't. Really, I won't. I think I'll go with:human genomes. I don't know what for.
Immortality, maybe. That always sounds

»why

is it called a swansong?«good. Yeah, The Immortality Gate, that's a good title. It would
have to be more advanced

It

refers to a dying swan that's mute until the moment of its death, when it singsthan human
technology, so maybe there are aliens at work behind the scenes, maybe

heavenly song - a bit like the Ood's song, I imagine. And then it dies. Hence, harmless aliens using the place as research or something, adding to the technology -- and

swansong.

But I only know that because Tennyson wrote a poem about it.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

»The faces! All those faces! Soldiers marching, all John
Simm.«
Text message from:
BenTerrifying, yes! Nightmarish! It brings to mind The Matrix - the second one,
I Sent: 16-Jun-2008 12:28think, The Matrix
Reloaded. I gave up after that. (Wachowski Brothers, what were
you OH YES! HOW BRILLIANT! Just don't get
confused, and put thethinking?!) It's just like the Hugo Weaving character (is it Agent
Smith?), in a black Brigadier in Torchwood
snogging Ianto.suit and tie, multiplied over and over and over. Brrrr!

So, what's the next step? I mean, before you can develop this idea further,
do FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN
COOK, TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2008 02:30:17 GMT

you have to run it past The Mill? Maybe if you completely 3D-model John's
head, RE: SORRY!you can transpose a lot of those faces
without John having to replicate every single Here's more
Torchwood script. It's getting quite interesting now. I had such a
goodposition...?
this afternoon, writing scenes of people chatting in kitchens. Gay people in

Ordinary stuff. It's been so long since I could do that. Four years? Five? IFROM: RUSSELL
T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 15 JUNE 2008 19:44:44
GMT think that's why this script has taken so long;
I've been gearing up to finding that styleRE:
SORRY!

(Or did I find it too easy? Ah, never happy.) But how nice to write TorchwoodTHE
MATRIX!!!!!!
as real people, with families, feuds, aches, and pains. That's the direction

Bollocks.
always wanted to take it in for Series Three. Back to home and hearth. Chris Chibnall

I hate
you.
such beautiful stuff at the end of Series Two by writing a prequel story for every

Damn, damn, damn, that didn't even occur to me. I literally hadn't thought of
that. character in Fragments, and a magnificent Gwen-based
story in Adrift. He really pavedBut it's exactly the same! A multiple person, like a million
Hugo Weavings! (And what the way. He showed me where to
go. Come home, he said. Come home.the hell were those films about in the end? No wonder
I'd blanked them.) That is such
Meanwhile, some sort of
phone call is on its way to John Barrowman. He has aa pissar. If you'd seen my face when I

got your e-mail...! But I've had 20 minutes and a couple of naked scenes this series. Although he's got a fantastic body (we've all seen *Coronation Street* to think about it, and I think I'll go ahead, partly because of the lack most if it!), no actor is ever too happy about naked scenes. It's one of Andy Pryor's other ideas, partly because a good idea is a good idea, and partly because I know that terrible jobs. He phones the agent, the agent phones John, and John can then talk to I didn't think, 'Oh, I'll do a Matrix.' Besides, it'll be so different. Completely different. Andy or me direct, if he wants. Bloody hell, though. The bloody Matrix.

P.S. Swansong. That's beautiful. I like that.
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2008 02:40:27 GMT

SORRY! FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 16 JUNE 2008 01:49:08 GMT
If one actor will strip off without hesitation, it's John. . . isn't it? Surely it's John? RE: SORRY!

The Matri! I am still staggered.
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 17 JUNE 2008 03:02:53 GMT

Here's a bit more Torchwood script, mostly rewriting. Today, we heard that Freema RE: SORRY! is completely booked up - no wonder, with 13 episodes of Law & Order to film - so You'd be surprised. I'm really quite interested to see what his reaction will be to this. she can't appear in the Sarah Jane Adventures finale either. Scripts all written, filming But Captain Jack is blown to smithereens with a bomb in his stomach, then all his cells in three weeks' time. Nightmare! Etc. These things happen from time to time. Agents sort of draw back together, so there's no way he can wake up fully clothed. The things cock up dates. I've had to write her out of Torchwood completely. Not even a cameo. I do to see arse. Poor Martha Jones.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE 2008 14:07:40 GMT

Text message from:
Russell E: SORRY!
Sent: 16-Jun-2008 12:17
am within a spit
and a cough of finishing this Torchwood script. I've been sitting here

Today's big idea: to replace Martha in Sarah Jane with the Brigadier!⁶
typing for ten days solid. Please. Help. Me.

went downstairs earlier, and found Lis Sladen sitting on the floor in the lobby. Sarah
UNIT'S Brigadier Alistair Gordon Lethbridge-Stewart (played by Nicholas
Courtney) first appeared in Doctor Who in Jane Smith! Just sitting there! 'I don't
know what time my pick-up is.' So, I sat with her. 1968, and returned regularly from
1970 to 1974. His final appearance was in 1989 serial Battlefield.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE
FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

On the floor. For 20 minutes. I love that woman. You look into her eyes and think, programme of the week! Ha ha ha! It's Doctor Who's first time in the Number One'Christ, she still looks 21.' How does she do that? position in its whole 45-year history. It's gobsmacking. Someone should write a book

how we did it...!FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE 2008 14:09:10 GMT

RE:
SORRY!
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 7 JULY 2008 15:36:09 GMT

Portrait in her attic, I reckon.
RE: JOURNEY'S
END

all that wrangling earlier this year over the two-Doctors-and-Rose sceneFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 24 JUNE 2008 00:56:36 GMT on Bad Wolf Bay, because it didn't feel anything like human experience? Well, I'veRE:

SORRY!
an e-mail from lovely Pete Bowker...I've got a stinking cold, so I didn't go to the Sarah Jane read-through today in case I *In having one Doctor grieve for his lost love, while the other Doctor went off with that*gave the Brigadier pneumonia. Yes, THE BRIGADIER! Nicholas Courtney himself! Julie *same lost love, you have written of that moment we all have when we make a choice.*texted to say that he was fantastic, and she's not one to be all loved-up with the old series. *It is the grieving for the love we never had (and the sex we never had) because of the*

we made. It did

Text message from:
Russell work! I love that e-mail.

Sent: 4-Jul-2008 20:54

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 7 JULY 2008 16:22:51 GMT

I'm stressing about Journey's End. We've promised so much with last

week's cliffhanger to The Stolen Earth, and the frankly astonishing level

RE: JOURNEY'S END

of news coverage over the past week has surprised us all.

I'm worried

Camden ahoy! I'm moving my stuff into my new place on Wednesday. All this packing

that people will switch off in disgust after the first scene tomorrow is sending me insane. So much stuff! Although, wasn't Camden bombed by the Daleks

evening.7

Foolish

people.

location fail.

in The Stolen Earth! Epic

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 8 JULY 2008 17:21:57 GMT

Text message from: Ben

Sent:

4-Jul-2008

21:00

RE:

JOURNEY'S END

Everyone will love every moment of Episode 13... until the end, when Moving house, along with BT Internet, is the worst evil known to man. God help

they'll feel let down by the lack of a 'What? What?? Whaaaat??'

you.

cliffhanger

featuring

the

Cybermen.

I had a Very

Good Idea today. Well, it was on Sunday, but I e-mailed this to Julie

today

to see what she thinks:

Text

message

from:

Russell

up against the Master. Who better to have as a faithful

Last Special. The Doctor

Sent:

4-Jul-2008

21:06

TARDIS, then Wilfred Mott?! I could make it work! It means

companion, in the

He

he.

You

killed

Doctor

Who.

background a little more than we'd planned, but just an

Catherine cameoing in the

day's filming on top of that wedding scene I'd mentioned. She wouldn't get her
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SUNDAY 6 JULY
2008 10:30:12 GMT

back. It would be a hoot. People love Bernard Cribbins. And it's such a shame

he never got to go on board the TARDIS and have a proper adventure.
DavidJOURNEY'S END

My God! Have you seen the overnight viewing figures for Journey's
End?! *would love it, too.*

has just replied with the words 'GOLD DUST'! That's a deal, then. Both Bernard

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 6 JULY
2008 10:40:20 GMT

Wilf have been ticking away in my head ever since I watched those final scenes of

End, with him saluting the TARDIS in farewell. That's why you should watch

RE: JOURNEY'S END

I know! 9.4 MILLION!!!!!! This writing lark, eh? It's not bad, is it? The most
watched stuff on transmission - it's inspiring! I thought, isn't it a shame that he
never got to

inside the TARDIS? Remember when we first booked Bernard, and he thought

was going to travel in the TARDIS? He never did. Today, those thoughts coalesced.

7 The cliffhanger to Doctor Who 4.12, broadcast on 28 June 2008, sees
the Doctor start to regenerate.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

CHA

FIFTEEN: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE QUEEN

All of a sudden, clear as day, I thought: I cannot let him go. I cannot let it end like that. and too funny to waste. Imagine them tracking down the Doctor! I can't, I can't, I can't. I must write more stuff for him. Wilfred unleashed! We wanted

different sort of companions for these Specials, so what could be better than Gramps?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
TUESDAY 8 JULY 2008 19:33:26 GMT

As I said to Julie, bringing back Wilf will mean including a bit more Donna

RE: JOURNEY'S END(hooray!), but she's not getting her memory back. No way. That's fixed. That really Also, today, I thought, let's make the Master part-skeleton! What do you think? Hewould spoil past stories.

You'd have to glimpse her throughout this new story, just in was as good as dead until the Sect of Saxon brought him back, so how about now,the background, the Doctor having to avoid her, Wilf filling in the Doctor on what's every so often, he shudders and transforms into a living skeleton? The Mill can dohappened to her life, with so much sadness. Like in Journeys End, when he says to the skeletons, although they're expensive and time-consuming (that's why we see so fewDoctor: 'But she was better with you!' I love that line. I'm not spoiling that. Dalek exterminations), but this could be a proper skeleton, with real eyes. There's

Oh Christ, Donna is getting married! I have to include that for the ending. But that nothing creepier than eyes in a skeleton. In my experience! You only get flashes of it.

could act in my favour: she's all busy and distracted, the wedding-mad Donna of The The Master starts to shiver, and shake, and... he's a living skeleton! Scary.

Runway Bride, so Wilf is free to get out of the house and have an adventure of his own.

I can see that scene quite clearly... the Doctor and Wilf sitting in a cafe, Donna pulls FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 10 JULY 2008 21:28:09 GMT

up opposite, she's come to pick up Wilf, she's beeping the horn, the Doctor looking at RE: JOURNEY'S END

her through the cafe window (scenes through glass are always nicely shot -- directors You on set with Sarah Jane tomorrow? I was going to come down, but now I've got to

love them), while Wilf says, plaintively, that her life just isn't as good. Why

doesn't she do phone interviews with Australia all morning. For three hours! I'll try to come along

get out of the car to pick up Wilf? Won't she see the Doctor? I know she met him as in the afternoon. What they don't know on set is that we haven't quite secured the

John Smith at the end of 4.13, but this should feel, now, like he shouldn't ever be seen rights to use the Brigadier yet! Oops. We're soldiering on (ho ho) in the hope that we

by her. Anyway, details, I can fix that. can fix it, but there's always a brand new piece of madness to take us by surprise. 8

What's more, Wilf has reminded me of that story that I described to you in the Then, this afternoon, Torchwood turned out to need so much work that I had to

very first chapter of The Writer's Tale: the old codgers with their Alien Watch gang. Do cancel my trip to San Diego. Julie and I were supposed to be going at the end of the

you remember? I realised that I was imagining Wilf and the Doctor in that cafe with month. It's the huge Comic-Con convention, with about 100,000 guests (the room

other people around them, a few old codgers, funny and wheezing away, plus a nice for the Doctor Who session has 4,000 seats!) and I'm supposed to go to promote Doctor

old lady that Wilf's taken a shine to. Enid, maybe? Nice name, Enid. My godmother *Who... but no, I'll be in Cardiff Bay. Julie has people lining up for dinner, like the Lost*

was called Enid. Sweet, lovely characters. And I was thinking about this quite happily, people and an invite to the Skywalker ranch, so I'm even more pissed off that I'm not

until I realised that it's that Alien Watch group from Chapter 1 of our book! Those going.9 I would have loved all that. A bit of sci-fi schmoozing. Still, she'll be wonderful.

old codgers have sneaked back in. The Writer's Tale is intruding into the script, but in a It turns out that Steven is going, and he's the Big Boss now, so that might actually be

good way. I believe the Alien Watch, that's the crucial thing. I believe that Wilf, having better for the show. All the same, today's been a real pisser.

known the Doctor, would be watching the skies for aliens and fighting the good fight. Never mind that. Hooray for your new home. And our book goes to print tomorrow,

Since Donna
can't. in Germany.
Exterminieren! So, good times, really. Hope you're really happy in Camden,

I know what I'm thinking of, too, with this greasy-spoon cafe: there was a
brilliant Ben. With many adventures.

scene in Paul Abbott's Reckless: The Sequel, where Robson Green's character,
Owen, sits

in a cafe with, er, someone -- can't remember who -- and pours out his
problems. As the

scene goes on, all the old men and women who sit about in greasy spoons all
day begin

to chip in to the dialogue, giving him advice. Lovely, slightly surreal scene. I've
never

forgotten it. Where do you get your ideas from? Paul Abbott! Best answer yet.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 8 JULY
2008 19:08:19 GMT

RE: JOURNEY'S
END 8 Shortly
afterwards, Henry Lincoln and Mervyn Haisman, the writers who created
Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart back in the

1960s,
granted the BBC permission to use the character in the Sarah Jane
Adventures Series Two finale.

I knew it! I knew you'd use that Alien Watch idea somewhere, eventually. It's
too good 9 Skywalker Ranch, in secluded cut open country near
Nicasio, California, is the workplace of George Lucas.

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CHAPTER SIXTEEN

EVERYTHING CHANGES

In which Torchwood climaxes with an anti-puberty drug,

Madonna moves in next door,
and the Eleventh Doctor arrives

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 17
JULY 2008 17:06:09 GMT

THE BIG DINNER

Things are moving fast here, faster than I can say. Torchwood is in a desperate state.

DESPERATE! The final episode climaxes with the classic line, 'Tell the professor we

need that anti-puberty drug NOW!!!' I'm not kidding. And it's all my fault. I never

paid the final episode enough attention. I am weeping. So -

First, a bit of context. Last night was a Big Dinner with Julie and Jane, discussing

plans for the future, which boil down to: next May or June or July, whenever the

Specials are more or less finished, I go to LA. To live! Seriously, that's what they're

suggesting! With Jane arranging it all. (I'm like a baby in a pram.) I was bleating

protestations like, 'I can't drive. Everyone drives in LA.' Jane says, 'Right, we'll get

you an assistant. She can drive you.' I said, 'He.' She said, 'Yes, okay.' They were

talking about where I'd like to live ('Hills or beach?'),
and what I'd do (adapt Bob &

*Rose for the American market as a long-runner, or maybe More
Gay Men set in LA, or*

maybe something brand new and unexpected), and it
was just... mind-boggling. You

wouldn't have recognised me at this meal, because I
hardly said a word. I just sat there

nodding and going 'uh-huh', but I was thinking... well
I wasn't even thinking. My

118 CONTINUED:

118

YOUNG CLEM
What's in there? What is it?

CAPTAIN JACK
Just go. Into the light.

YOUNG CLEM
It's safe, though. Isn't it?

CAPTAIN JACK
Yeah. It's safe.

CUT TO:

119 INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT 3

119

CLEM scared, holding on to GWEN; she's fearing the worst,
but trying to fight it. CAPTAIN JACK so still, so quiet.

GWEN
- no, but that's what he does, he
fights them, he fights aliens,
isn't that right, Jack?

CAPTAIN JACK
No.

GWEN
Then why were you there?

CAPTAIN JACK
I gave them the kids. It's all my
fault. 1965, I gave them 12
children.

GWEN
...what for?

CAPTAIN JACK
As a gift.

END OF EPISODE 3.3

brain was spinning. In turmoil! Like... really?!

I got back to the hotel, and I just sat there for hours.
I wish I'd had e-mail. I almost

phoned you up, but then thought I'd sound too girly.
But I was thinking... oh, a

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES

I travelled back to Cardiff on the train this morning, read Torchwood Episodes 4 and ready to be a small fish in a big pool, rather than British TV King?5, and then sat for six hours giving notes. I asked if we could delay production, and Seriously, though - wow! Huge congratulations. Look, whether you stay here or go toJulie said no, because it would cost us 250,000, and then, because there's no way out LA, you'll do amazing things. I mean, what's left to say? If only I had some well-chosen

the professor, we need that anti-puberty drug! NOW!!!myself. That's two new scripts in the next fortnight, and it's going to kill me. And I sat

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 18 JULY 2008
02:26:02 GMTthousandth time, the mess that you get on every single sodding show
anywhere ever,

meet new people, and do new things, and learn new stuff. If I do end up in a meeting DJ Championships? Sadly, I'm with your mate Alex - I'm dying to see Mamma Mia!

own. (My mate Peter was out in Greece when they were filming that, and Pierceover - then at least I will be doing so beside the pool, in the sun.

So, there we go. What strange days! It still feels far off and unreal, especially now that

It's weird, this LA stuff. After I sent you that e-mail, I thought, I bet Ben is imagining I'm back here in Cardiff, in the same old seat, like none of it ever happened. But look that I've had all sorts of conversations about this over the last few months, and I just at this year: two more Torchwoods to write, two Specials to be co-written with Gareth Roberts and Phil Ford, plus the final two Specials all on my own... so it's like the rest haven't bothered mentioning it, but... no, not really. It's sort of happened around me. It was mentioned, ages back, and I said, 'That'd be good,' and since then Julie has of 2008, the whole bloody year, has vanished into a pit of work. talked about it as definite, like 'When we're in America,' and I've just nodded. But Right now, I think I'm going to sit and just watch bad TV. This will be my last that's it, really. That's all. I've sort of been swept along. Rather, I let myself be swept chance to sit and do nothing for weeks. along. Maybe that's my version of cunning. But even at the dinner with Jane, she didn't exactly make an offer. It wasn't that formal. It was more of a nice chat, like, right, how FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. FRIDAY 18 JULY 2008 01:47:58 GMT are we going to do this? Very strange. I'm still trying not to think about it too much. RE: THE BIG DINNER But when you say that I'll be a small fish in a big pond, which is absolutely right, I Tonight, I attended the UK DJ Championships Final, at Catling Academy Islington! instinctively think, oh good! I really do. That would be lovely. All that 'celebrity writer' Lots of scratching, spinning, beat-boxing and... actually, it was a lot of bloody noise. I stuff pisses me off. (That Voyage of the Damned press launch feeling has never really spent the whole time texting my mate Alex, who'd gone to see Mamma Mia! The Movie gone away.) I'm lucky, because I'd be small, but not poor - and not quite unknown, (I think he's having 'a crisis'), trying to decide who's having the sillier night.

because

the effect of the US Queer as Folk still rumbles on out there. Also, if the whole

I got home to find an e-mail from another mate that says, 'You and Russell have sold

thing

stinks, I could just come straight back here. Thank God, there aren't enough

out the National Theatre, almost! I could only get tickets in the circle!' Our Platform

good

writers in the UK for me to be out of work. That's horribly true.

Event on 7 November, to promote the book, has 18 seats left out of 880! It only went

I'm

off to bed now. I've got the Torchwood Tone Meeting From Hell first thing

on sale a week or so ago. Meanwhile, Roger Moore on 16 October has 283 unsold

tomorrow,

sitting there saying, 'Ah yes, this scene won't actually happen. Nor this one.

seats. Russell, you're officially more popular than James Bond! I think we should add

Nor

this one. Nor...' Etc.

another date, due to popular demand.

P.S.

WE'VE SOLD OUT AT THE NATIONAL!!! Does that mean we have to sign

It sounds as though you've had an incredible couple of days. The Big Dinner! You're

880

books afterwards? Ben, I think it does. Bloody hell. Equally, how fantastic!

off to LA! Possibly! OH. MY. GOD!!! But the far-off and surreal will become very, very

real ridiculously quickly. Was this offer from Jane really that unexpected? You must have

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 20 JULY 2008
02:25:32 GMT

known it was coming. It's the logical next step. You've all but conquered British TV - or

RE:

THE BIG DINNER

will have, once you've overseen the definitive third series of Torchwood (I have faith)
and

Friday's

Tone Meeting lasted NINE HOURS! And that was only Episodes 1 to 3.

David's Doctor Who finale -- and maybe, dare I say it, you've outgrown it. If you don't

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SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 22 JULY 2008
10:15:03 GMT There's so much to do, and muggins here doesn't bloody know how the whole thing

ends. (Well, I do -- Jack has to kill his grandson, that's a given -- but I don't know how
RE: THE BIG DINNER

This
Torchwood stuff is so bad, and so late, and so impossible to fix, that I went for
and why we get there.) I think I was a bit cornered. When that happens, I'm rude
to

coffee
in the Bay yesterday -- and sat there for four hours. I just couldn't come
homepeople. I've a feeling that I upset some people around that table. It kind of
sums me

and
face it. Four hours! I bought every newspaper and magazine under the sun
(Newup, that I can't actually tell if I have or not. I'm blind to myself. But the
consequences

Scientist,
just to delay coming back to this seat. What a disaster. were flying about this
morning in e-mails and phone calls, and I... went to bed! I went
to bed at 1 lam, and woke up at 6pm. I just closed down. That's one way to
escape your

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 24 JULY 2008
10:30:21 GMT problems. I recommend it. When I woke up, everything had calmed
down and gone

RE:

THE BIG DINNER away. Well, until tomorrow.

Have
you heard the latest from Ebury? The Times wants to buy the first serial rights for

Anyway, I want to update you on the Doctor Who Christmas Special. For
ages, I've

The
Writer's Tale\ How insane. They envisage publishing two extracts in the Times 2
arts

been thinking of doing that story about the family in the hotel on Christmas
Eve,

section.

I think we should do TV adverts, too, in which you and I sit in leather wing-

where Gran wishes they'd all disappear and they promptly vanish. As does everyone in

backed

chairs, smoking pipes, promising a fascinating insight into art and culture

the whole wide world! And then she meets the Doctor. Cue titles! Always loved that

and...

shit.

story -- and always worried about it, because I can tell how hard it is to generate story

out of an empty world. But now I've had another idea...

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 24 JULY 2008 13:07:18 GMT

Christmas on Mars! A Mars base in the near future. It's not all wild and clever; it's **RE: THE BIG DINNER**

much more real. Proper airlock doors that are difficult to open instead of just Serialised! In The Times! I'm still laughing. My first proper laugh in weeks. Since Friday,

swooshing. We'd make that primitiveness part of the story. We could look at genuine I've had two weeks to rewrite two episodes of Torchwood, and guess how much I've

NASA plans for a Mars colony, and extrapolate from that. Plus, added monster. I done? NOTHING. I am sitting here all day, every day, frozen in terror. Not writing a

mentioned this Mars idea to Julie, and she liked it, but she said, 'Let's press ahead with single word. I haven't got a clue how the whole thing ends. This is severe.

the hotel idea for now.' We had a meeting with Phil Ford last Friday (11 July), in Pizza

Express, and he loved the hotel idea. He came out with one brilliant, pivotal image, FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 24 JULY 2008 13:32:46 GMT

which really sold the story to me: imagine if the whole world is empty, and then you **RE: THE BIG DINNER**

hear the lift ping! Something has arrived. That simple ping becomes the most terrifying When I've asked you whether you start writing a story with the ending in sight,

sound in the world. Nice one. He's great to work with. He grabs ideas, and twists and or whether a leap into the dark is sometimes more thrilling, you've said that you

turns them for all they're worth. I'm still uneasy, though. It feels more Halloween-y always know the emotional beats of the ending. You know how it feels. You know

than Christmas Day. Let's see. which characters survive, and which don't. (Poor lanto.) At this stage in the scripting

process, I imagine you as playing, like, a giant game of Tetris, frantically manipulating

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVISS TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 21 JULY 2008 17:05:19 GMT

a barrage of narrative elements (falling from the sky, in pretty-coloured blocks!) to

RE: THE BIG DINNER form complete, workable storylines. Marvel at my metaphors, yeah! It must feel easier

I received Typo Of The Week this morning, a letter asking me to talk at the Oxford in hindsight, of course, but is this the first time that you've absolutely no idea how to

Student Union. 'Your work, including Queer as Folk and The Second Coming, confirms fit together the pieces of story, to resolve the plot emotionally and structurally? Or has

you as one of the television writers working in Britain today.' Do you think they meant it ever been even more skin-of-your-teeth?

to put an adjective in there? Sexiest? Tallest? Welsh-est?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 24 JULY 2008 14:49:34 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 22 JULY 2008 03:01:29 GMT

RE: THE BIG DINNER

RE: THE BIG DINNER The ending of New Earth was fairly skin-of-my-teeth, with those magical potions and

Oxford Uni ain't what it used to be.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES			

things.¹ But the real ending, with Cassandra meeting her younger, human self, was three weeks! How the hell did that happen? always planned. This is why I, literally, cannot write scenes out of order. By not writing After the concert, we went backstage. Have you been backstage at one of these the Cassandra-and-Chip ending first, the climax gained in strength from everything things, to see the life of a superstar?! You enter this cryptic world of whispers, and that it had picked up along the way.

2 For example, in Rose and Cassandra's first signals, and hints. It's like the Russian secret service. First of all, you go to a bar. But encounter in New Earth, Cassandra calls Chip her 'favourite pattern'. But that line that's just a holding area. On the signal, you get taken to a smaller bar, which is really was a complete throwaway. It sounded camp and uncaring, I figured, for Cassandra just an improvised dressing room, while people like Will Baker hint that Kylie may to think of a clone as a swatch of fabric. However, once in place, I used that line.

I appear. 'Give it half an hour. See what happens.' Fair enough. She's just performed thought, why is Chip her favourite pattern? Ah, because the Chip pattern was the last for two-and-a-half hours in the biggest show ever. I wouldn't blame her for telling 'person' to tell her that she was beautiful. I knew that Future Cassandra (transplanted everyone to piss off. But then comes the nod. We're all led down the corridor, to into Chip's body) would die in Human Cassandra's arms, but I hadn't planned on her dressing room... which is tiny, but decked out like a Hawaiian beach, complete Future Cassandra calling her beautiful. That only occurred to me when I was writing with cocktail bar, and cocktail-bar woman who'll make you whatever you want... and Rose and Cassandra's encounter. When Cassandra said then that the last time she had there's the Pop Princess! Looking utterly beautiful in a dress that's beyond glittery! been called beautiful was on that night long ago, I knew that it would form part of the Kylie is honestly so lovely. She greeted strangers like my old fella with a hug and ending. But of course it feels easier in hindsight. a kiss, which made his day, and she was genuinely happy to see people like Louise

Endings are at their most satisfying when the pieces of story slot together like... yeah, Page. But all of this in some strange, fake Hawaii, in the echoing concrete jungle that's

like Tetris! Great metaphor. Even on the soaps, I think you get the most satisfaction backstage at the Millennium Dome. The fact that Morvin, Foon and Midshipman

from those rare one-off episodes that impose a Beginning, Middle and End. Production Frame were there - and Russell Tovey's mother! - made it all the weirder. Russell's

was there, too. His beautiful, handsome, policeman boyfriend. Does his mechanics -- and the sheer volume -- force different shapes on soaps. Most of the time, know how lucky he is? Actually, I think he does. Bastard! Hmph. they're simply One Scene After Another. There's no intrinsic shape, but we're happy to in the day, we had the Doctor Who Prom at the Royal Albert Hall (have watch that, because there's a different shape in our heads: our own knowledge of our read Caitlin's piece about it in The Times' It's so lovely, and so right), with the working week, and the pattern that the soap will form across those five days. A string awful Torchwood storms still raging. Me and Julie with fixed smiles, poor Euros of lanterns across the week. That's the shape. So, planning a soap means that there are of quite how bad it is, and even my old fella, who I never talk to about all sorts of technicalities to bear in mind -- ones that don't relate to the actual story, asking, 'Has something gone wrong?' I'm wondering how long it'll take me to but to the transmission itself. If, say, you always get your highest viewing figures on a I'll be quick...

Friday, then maybe you plan your Big Events for a Friday -- or maybe, on the contrary, Fay has written some truly magnificent stuff for Episode 4, so I won't have to you plan Big Events for a Monday, so Monday's figures start to equal Friday's. that one after all - he's lovely, he can take the notes, and get it up to speed easily The tentative plan for Torchwood is that all five episodes will be show across one week, but the gaping void of Episode 5 is staring at me, and we're seriously running out of from Monday to Friday, on BBC One. The plotting is a whole science in itself, and When I said to you the other day that it's all my fault, I'm only just beginning fascinating. It's a story being written according to the transmission and cast workload. realise what has happened, in this new five-episode process. A long time back, we

But then that's often the case on Doctor Who. Production rules.

all of us together, at the emptiness of Episode 5. We had no solution. Nothing.

had bits of plot, but no story, no essence, no real reason for the show to exist. So,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 28 JULY
2008 16:28:25 GMT

took a deep breath and... well, I gave away one of the best ideas I've ever had. The

I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

being, it wasn't a Torchwood idea. It was a notion I've had in my head for about

Last night, we went to see Kylie at the O2 Arena. She was brilliant. Truly amazing.

years, and a series that I've always been dying to write, and something I'd talked

I'm not really into those big arena shows, but this one was spectacular. Kylie's life must

at length with Nicola Shindler, and Phil Collinson, and Julie, hoping that we

be so strange. I think she's even more magnificent now, for handling it so well. It's

make it together one day. They loved it. They always said, 'Let's do it,' ahead of

impossible, looking at her in that setting, to think that we got her to Upper Boat for

other idea I've ever had.

1 To save the infected, zombified humans in a hospital in New New
York, the Doctor empties intravenous medical solutions It was, essentially,
a family drama, in which the world goes to hell, ending with our

into a disinfectant shower, and sprays the mixture on the diseased
humans, who are instantly cured. The Doctor encourages

them to spread the cure to the other sufferers through touch.

safe, comfy western society descending into anarchy or a military state. Those

2 In Doctor Who 2.1, Cassandra has a devoted force-grown clone
assistant called Chip.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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nightmare regimes that we see in Africa, or Bosnia, or in history - but right here, on ideas, but the conversations haven't taken off. Shame. Except, talking about dogfightour doorsteps, with ordinary people like you and me, and our mums and dads, and and space bases, we wondered who or what the tough, female pilot (the Companionour brothers and sisters, not just watching it, but part of it. Brilliant idea. And now I Of The Week) is fighting. I suggested the Chelonians. The Chelonians are man-sizedfind myself using it up on Torchwood. I love Torchwood, but this was a good six hours tortoisoes from Gareth's '90s Doctor Who novel The Highest Science, so he owns theof drama, maybe 12 hours, maybe three years of drama, that I've been planning for copyright. Neill Gorton would have a brilliant time creating spaceship-flying tortoisoes,decades, condensed onto the ending of a sci-fi spin-off thriller. with flying-helmet goggles on. I did float another idea: a classic double-decker bus in

So, the raging that I mentioned, that raging has been me. I feel like I've cannibalised outer space. The image has been floating about in my head for ages. An ordinary bus, my own work, like my head is going into revolt. I've got a blank script, and I've got full of ordinary people, goes through a wormhole, ends up in the middle of a dogfightthe material with which to fill those 70 pages, and yet... and yet my brain can't, won't, in outer space. ('Where does the bus get its oxygen from?' Oh, shut up!)will not do it! While the clock is ticking. While everyone is waiting. While no other Gareth went away to write up a treatment. He e-mailed to say, 'If this is a war, withsolution is appearing. Christ, I've been sour with people. I've been unbearable. Add a space base and soldiers, it's going to be gritty, right?' 'Okay,' I say, 'follow the story.to this the fact that I have to rewrite James Moran's Episode 3, and we're filming in Make it gritty.' But when he phoned me to describe his story, he had the Doctor andthree weeks! We're trying to book actors, but the classy ones -- we're trying to get Peter the pilot reach the space base only to discover that it's... an outer-space hotel, withCapaldi in as the civil servant (a distant descendant of Caecilius, I like to imagine, bellboys, and lifts, and mysteriously disappearing guests! (They were being taken downwithout his strapping son, sadly) -- want to know the full story before they accept... to the planet below, to be implanted with alien eggs, because eggs = Easter.) Gritty? A

hotel?!

That's not gritty. That's Thoroughly Modern Millie. Besides, I hated the hotel.and we haven't got one.

A

sci-fi hotel could make a good episode of Doctor Who, but it has to be the central

So, at the height of all this, I sort of walked out. I went to the cinema with my

premise.

This story had the hotel, but still with the dogfights, and the war, and the

phone off. I saw The Dark Knight (very good, not brilliant), WALL-E (wonderful), and

pilot.

That's a ramshackle shed-load of random ideas jammed together.

Wanted (great fun), just sitting in the dark all day long, with a flat mobile, wishing

So,

we went back to the bus idea, the red double-decker bus in space, and actually every bastard dead. I got back, eventually-- and I'm not sure anyone had even noticed

the

boring question of 'How do they breathe?' was more important than it first seemed.

I'd gone. What a walkout! I can't even do that properly.

You

could magic up an oxygen field -- maybe the Doctor is carrying it with him, just

It's still not resolved. We might have to split filming into two blocks, and get a new

in

case! -- but it all seemed a bit lucky. Right, okay, forget outer space. What if this

director in for Episodes 4 and 5, because they'll be so late -- if they ever exist, because I

bus

goes through a wormhole and lands on a planet? That's still a great, surreal image,

can't think of a bloody ending -- which takes us into September, October, all my 'spare

maybe

even better than space. But film where? A beach? A quarry? There are some

time' gone, all impacting on the Doctor Who Specials. Oh, that's Christmas ruined. But

amazing,

empty beaches further along the coast, windswept and bleak --

that's par for the course, really.

Ah.

Hold on. At this point, someone (I can't remember who) pointed out that we're

filming

in January. It's going to be freezing. Worse, we'll have very little sunlight. This

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 28 JULY 2008 17:23:14 GMT

alien

vista doesn't feel like a night shoot somehow. It should be open, and wide, and

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

amazing.

So, I open my gob... and cannibalise myself! Again! Ages ago, I'd asked Julie

Ouch. Ouch, ouch, ouch. You have to rewrite Episode 3 before you can tackle Episode

whether

we could have foreign filming for 4.17/4.18. It was way back, just after the

5, right? Isn't the read-through next Friday?! Do you think you're leaving it this late so

transmission

of The Fires of Pompeii. I'd thought, why aren't we aiming for those visuals

that the sheer panic will provide the
adrenalin?
again? I'd said, 'Let's find a desert. Let's
have the last confrontation between the Doctor

and

the Master in a wide-open desert. Sky. Sun. Bleached bones. Epic.' And Julie had

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 28 JULY
2008 17:30:11 GMT

said

yes, because she makes things happen. But now, but now... ohh, I had to say, heavy-

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,
BUT... hearted, 'Well, if we're going to
a desert, what about using it for Gareth's story? A bus,

Yeah, probably. What a stupid way to work. I'm finding it impossible to summon
up in the desert, for real.' Julie said, 'What about the two-part Master story?' I
said, Tough.

the resources. Current progress on Episode 3 is zero pages. But it wasn't a
completely I'll have to think of something else.' So, it was done. Gareth delighted,
obviously.

wasted day. I had one good idea for Gareth's Doctor Who Special this afternoon -

At

the same time, the flying idea lingered, because I knew that there was only one

To update you, we've moved on from spaceships, lasers and X-wing fighters, or

ending:

to get out of the desert, back through the wormhole, the bus has to fly. Anti-

even the Doctor on board the Starship Enterprise. There's a lot of promise in those

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SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

gravity clamps or something. Maybe another alien ship has crash-landed, too. It's staffed
Next thing you know, the bus has gone into a tunnel, whoosh, wormhole, brightby Friendly Outer-Space Flies (no longer Chelonians, because we can't ask an actor lights... and they drive onto an alien planet! The Doctor and Europe's greatest catto wear a tortoise suit in the bloody desert - we'd kill him), and the Flies provide the burglar (armed with wires, clamps and weapons in her little black bag), thrownc clamps. The triumphant image at the end is the double-decker bus, driven by the Doctor, together to survive. The middle of the story is still empty, but back home, at the end,

thinks she's about to run off -- maybe she thinks she could travel with the soaring back through the wormhole, and flying over London. Hooray! (Never mind that

-- but she's arrested. Or maybe, even better, she's arrested, but then we see her red double-deckers are no longer in service. They are in Doctor Who world.)

with a final smile at the Doctor, like 'Until we meet again!' Nice. Sexy. Fun.

We'd lost a lot, though. No dogfights meant no pilot. No companion! The

just a rough idea, but a good character, instantly sell-able to a guest actress, and Companion Of The Week has to be someone on the bus instead. Okay, plucky young

great partnership for the Doctor -- a sexy, sassy, hard-but-lovely woman with the girl, we can do that. What if the double-decker is an open-top tourist bus, and she's

of a thief. the guide? Gareth worked that up: alien planet, CGI stingray-creatures about to use

is how to invent a story. the wormhole to swarm to Earth (nice!), and a tour guide called Rebecca. Except, the

tour guide isn't working. This is what Gareth e-mailed me this morning:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 28 JULY 2008 17:48:30 GMT

My idea is that she's our version of Tracy Turnblad from Hairspray -- a big, happy, fat

I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

girl -- and she's the guide on the tour bus. It's a job that's not going anywhere, and she's

many writers tackle a) character and b) story as though they're separate things,

been wandering through life aimlessly, but apparently happily. But now she's getting

it's one big intermingled whole, isn't it? Who Hermione is is the story. (Even more

older, and none of her big dreams ever worked out... until this day, when, thanks to

since she's the Companion Of The Week.) Not sure about the name Hermione,

the Doctor, the entire universe and all its possibilities unfold around her. She's the kind

And can you really get a double-decker London bus into the desert on a BBC

of person that can only come good when there's a crisis on. Over the episode, we see her

get more confident, more capable, more serious. At the end, I'd like her to head off into

space with the Chelonians as an ambassador between them and other races. Earth was

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 28 JULY 2008
17:53:27 GMT

just never big enough for her.

I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

But I'm not keen. Much as I love Tracy Turnblad, I can't quite see her in Doctor Who.

with this team, anything is possible. Julie and I took Ed Thomas to one side and

However, we're running out of time. All our leisurely spare months of development are

'Bus. Desert. Can we do it?' A pause of about one and a half seconds. 'Yes.' I

disappearing. Then, this afternoon, I had a sudden fit of ideas...

love that man. Anyone else would run away. Or punch us. He just said, 'Yes.'

What if she's a jewel thief? A top-class, glamorous cat burglar? The Black Canary,

then he said, 'Morocco would be best. I'll do some sums.' That's all so far, although

that sort of thing.³ Scene 1, she's flying down on wires to steal something valuable

think Tunisia is also a possibility (long history of sci-fi filming there, because of Star
from a top-security vault. (Something that'll be handy in solving the plot at the end,

etc), but we'll see. We might yet end up in the Gower. In January.

as it happens. A jewel would be fantastic, but I've done that in Tooth and Claw. Some
sort of software...?) Alarms go off, she's on the run, skedaddles out of the building.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESD AY 29 JULY 2008
22:11:38 GMT

Hermione (I'm calling her Hermione) reaches the street, but sees her getaway driver

I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

surrounded by police. She runs off, and we're into a busy London street, crowds,

discussed Hermione with Gareth today. It has, literally, galvanised him. He lit up. I
people - she walks past a police box! - she's walking along fast, clutching her prize, but

hear his mind whirring - or I would have, if it hadn't been over e-mail. That's got
there are more policemen ahead of her, on walkie-talkies. So, she does the only thing

be good, for a writer. We've scheduled a face-to-face meeting for Friday.
she can do. She steps onto a bus. The nearest bus. The London double-decker. With

Phil Ford's outline for the Christmas Special arrived today. It doesn't work.
the Doctor on board! This is all fast, only two pages. She's clutching her stolen goods,

knew it. He's worked so hard on it (and it's called A Midwinter's Tale, which is beautiful),
maybe a police car appears behind the bus, so she's getting tenser and tenser (the

it's come out as sword and sorcery. I hate sword and sorcery. It's got an alien princess

Doctor maybe noticing, maybe not, because he's got a gadget that's reading
strange with a funny name, who's come to Earth to
be married. The lift goes ping, the Doctor and

space-time shenanigans), maybe the police see her and start to give
chase. Gran are terrified, they run to see
who's there... and out steps the Queen of the Shi'ar,

3 The Black Canary is a DC Comics superhero, noted for her martial arts skills. She was created by writer Robert Kanigher and

two muscled bodyguards. Now, I love a muscled bodyguard, but only in real life. (I

artist Carmine Infantino, and first appeared in Flash Comics #86, in August 1947.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES

see them often.) The plot ends up with them chasing through secret corridors underneath FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 02:17:18 GMT Buckingham Palace. Normally, I'd work on any storyline to get it moving, but this feels RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...like a dead end. Not Phil's fault. I feel guilty, because it's taken him ages to fill these pages, Is this the worst situation you've ever found yourself in during the scripting of a TVbut I don't think we can proceed with this. I don't want to. I don't want to spend licence-show? If not, can you think of a worse example? Go on, it'll make you feel better! It'llfee-payer's money on it. I don't believe it. put this into perspective. Yes, Russell, perspective.

So, Christmas on Mars! Poor Phil. But he's a grown-up. He won't mind.

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 02:20:55 GMTFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 01:52:28 GMT RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT... Is it the worst? I had to have a think. Truth be told, the production problems are neverDISASTER!!! Noel Clarke has pulled out of Torchwood. He's got a part in a Michael the worst, because they're exciting. I'm invigorated. Honestly, I am. I'm full of energy.Winterbottom film. Damn, damn, damn. I mean, that's brilliant for Noel - you watch When Julie phoned to tell me the Noel news, I thought of the answer on the spot.it, he's a star, that man, just watch him rise - but yikes! We've lost Mickey! Those (We're not replacing him. That would be awful. We're just reorganising the entire storyscripts are like splintered matchsticks. They're in pieces. Tiny pieces. It's so drastic, I'm so that we never need him in the first place -- which is more work, because it affectsactually laughing. the movements of every other character, but it tightens the whole thing.) The really

bad
times are the actual writing, new writing, starting from scratch. That's when I endFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 01:59:02 GMT up walking around the Bay, doing my head in, because that's just emptiness. NothingRE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT... exists. Or too many options exist. This problem, at least, has 75 pages of Episode 3I hadn't realised that Mickey was going to be in this series of Torchwood. He isn't in your yelling at me, waiting to be fixed - Hey. You're right. That has made me feel better.Episode 1, and that's all I've read. Why hadn't you booked Noel for Torchwood already?

The read-through is next

Friday!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 02:31:03 GMT

RE:

I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 02:10:29 GMT

Actually - I'm still thinking about it - the worst times are when you have to lie. I hateRE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

that. I hate lying. It catches up with you in the end. Always. Never lie!To book actors, you need specific dates, which means that we need a schedule. The

schedule can't be fixed until the scripts are ready. The Torchwood scripts are nowhere near

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 02:35:00 GMTfixed. (Noel would have appeared in Episodes 4 and 5.)

In other words, it's probablyRE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...my fault again. But this isn't unusual. The schedule/booking/script conundrum lies at

I want to know more about lying. (Yes!) Don't you have to lie all the time in the heart of every TV drama ever made, and it explains why the whole of the industry

business? At every press launch, for a start? In every interview? Even at Tone Meetings?operates in a panic all the time, everywhere, because no one ever has the money to

And auditions? And every time you're asked, 'How's the writing going?'... ? Isn't writingblock-book guest actors for the whole filming period. That's partly why films cost so

one big fat lie? Or is that the one place where the truth can out?much, so they can book actors throughout.

How much have you lied over the course of this Great Correspondence?

Sometimes, if someone has two jobs, you can wrangle dates with the other Honestly?!production company, but apparently this Winterbottom film can't change its dates

at all. Maybe we're being equally intransigent. Still, it's shocked me out of that not-

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 1 AUGUST 2008 02:38:37 GMTwriting-anything depression, like a jolt. No time to sit

about moping. I'm typing likeRE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...the wind! I managed 24 pages today. I

like your lying questions. I mean, I like your questions about lying. I must finish

In other news... oh, who am I kidding? There is no other news. My life is a Torchwood more Torchwood tonight... but I will give lying some thought (ha ha!), and get backhurricane. If there's a Series Four, I'm running for the hills. to you. I promise.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 2
AUGUST 2008 22:17:12 GMT FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO:
RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 4 AUGUST 2008 02:38:00 GMTRE: I ONLY
WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT... RE: I
ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...Great meetings with Gareth and Phil yesterday. In
Starbucks! Phil was especially lovely. Better to be grappling with a great idea at
2.30am than ploughing on with a terribleIt was clear how much he'd suffered to make a story
out of the Gran and the hotel. I'm one.kicking myself, because I should have stepped
in sooner and saved us all time. So, yes,

a Mars base, 2030 or 2050, not the far future, nice and reachable. We're still
thinking FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY
4 AUGUST 2008 02:41:39 GMT

of someone like Helen Mirren. She could be the wise, tough boss of the base. We
all RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...thought of her as Russian. The
monster should be some sort of creeping possession, Hmm, that's actually
worked. I'll keep going. For now.taking over crewmembers -- something from the air? The
soil? And the thing I love

most about this, the thing that I keep stressing, is... messages from home.
Those FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
TUESDAY 5 AUGUST 2008 00:07:18 GMTflickering videos of wives and kids,
beaming from Earth on Christmas Eve, messages RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY
HELLO, BUT...of love across outer space. Marvellous. There has to be some way to make that
pivotal, Finally, I finished that script at 6pm. I guess I underestimated how much
there was tonot just texture. But we were all very happy. Big smiles. You can feel this filling
up with do. But then I sat down, and channel-hopped, and there was Voyage of the
Damned oncharacter, and incident, and action, and
fun. BBC Three. I'm now calling The Writer's
Tale back from the printers, because I want

Today, Phil asked whether we can call it Red Christmas. Hmm. Nice. But I
prefer to say, 'That episode is BLOODY BRILLIANT!' It was like seeing it as new.
My God,*Christmas on Mars. Does exactly what it says on the tin. The Red is
clever, but sounds a* it's good.bit shlocky to me, like red = blood. You'd call a
Hammer Horror Christmas film that.

Still, we'll
see. FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008
12:02:23 GMT

RE:
I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:

BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 4 AUGUST 2008 02:31:46 GMT

Have you seen David's Hamlet reviews? They're sensational. And the ones that aren't are only because he's off the telly. It was on the front page of The Times! He really is Listen to this. Torchwood is spying on a government/alien meeting, with a mole on such a big star now. It couldn't happen to a nicer man. And you can't often say that.the inside called Lois Habiba, who's using the Magic Contact Lenses that Martha wore

in Torchwood 2.6. Through them, Torchwood can view whatever Lois sees, as though FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008 13:18:16 GMTthe contact lenses are cameras.

Torchwood can send Lois instructions, by typing out RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...messages that appear as text in the lenses, in her POV, like, right in her eyes.

But I couldn't agree more. I've been reading the reviews, too. Wonderful! It feels like onlycontact lenses can't convey sound, obviously. (The lenses did convey sound waves in yesterday that you were with him on his very first day on Doctor Who, him in his dressing*Torchwood last year, but I've got rid of that because... well, that's silly magic!*) So, if gown, facing down Harriet Jones. You in your hoodie, scribbling away on a notepad.someone is talking, Lois has to look at them. The lenses have software that can lip

read, and translate that into a computer voice, which plays out at Torchwood's end... FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008 13:37:35 GMTbut Lois still has to be looking right at whoever's talking. If she's not, or can't, she has

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...to scribble it down on a piece of paper, and look at that instead, to transmit it back We were on that waste ground in Brentford, weren't we? Next to the old Beecham'sto Torchwood. Plus, the alien hasn't got a mouth and talks through speakers, so Lois 1 harmaceuticals factory. You're right, it does feel like only yesterday. After his first take,has to write, and then look at all the alien's words, too. As if that wasn't complicated

David announced, 'You can send wee Jimmy Krankie home! She's not needed! You can'tenough, she writes everything in shorthand -- get rid of me now.' Ha ha. Do you remember him saying how exciting (and terrifying)

AAAAAAAARGH!!! It's doing my head in. It's so tricky to write. Literally, I have to write

hed found that first day? He said it felt as though he'd overdosed on tartrazine! Ah,what's happening, then Lois's version of that, then Torchwood's end of that, then the written

I loved that shoot. Filming for a week at Clearwell Caves, in Gloucestershire. Thewords, then the texts, then the computer voice... AAAAAAAAARGHHAHAHAH!!!

Sycorax spaceship! With the crew lugging all the equipment up and down thoseGreat scene, great

ideas, really class thriller stuff, all being jammed together at 2.30am,

caves! And David's swordfight on the wing of the spaceship, filmed in a quarry in a rush, with
no time to explore the potential. Such a shame. °n Barry
Island, by the sea, in the blazing sunshine.

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DOCTOR
TALE

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S

SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES

I interviewed David on Barry, in his stripy pyjamas. He said - I've just looked it
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008 20:12:14 GMT
up - 'How many other dramas do you get to have fantastic speeches, full of brilliant
RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...one-liners, and then do a sword fight? It's like, "Thanks, Russell! I'll take that, cheers." Phil Ford has delivered his Red Christmas treatment. It works! Good! Mind you, it's a bit pretty cool.' Oh, and he mooned the paparazzi out at sea. I'd forgotten that. There bit too sci-fi smart for me. The inhabitants keep flying in a shuttle from one base to a speedboat circling, so he just went, 'I'm going to show them my arse,' and pulled another. There should just be one base. This place should feel brave, desolate, raw and down his pyjama bottoms. One of the make-up girls was standing right behind him. exposed, not part of a complex. And Phil has them terraforming, which I don't like, He hadn't realised. 'It's okay,' she said, 'it's nothing I haven't seen before.' because that's massive and hugely sci-fi. It means they're taking over the whole planet.

This
should be a lonely, valiant bunch of scientists, fighting against the odds, not
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008 13:43:01 GMT
powerful at all. Still, wonderful characters. It's a delight to work with Phil. A constant
RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...
delight. I'd be lost without him. It was such a strange time, The Christmas Invasion. Strange and thrilling. And scary! It
One other thought, which I've passed on to Gary Russell, to talk about with Phil: was the first time we were making a programme that we knew to be a success - people what if this is a doomed colony, famous in (future) history for everyone having died, were watching! My God, the extra pressure. That feeling never went away. I've always for reasons unknown? Only the Doctor realises. It gives the story an epic quality. maintained, ever since then, that success is a lot harder to deal with than failure. Nice The Doctor is fighting history as well! What if he breaks the Laws of Time, he saves problem to have, I know, but all the same... the return of Doctor Who had gone from everyone, and that's his final arrogance? When the Ood appears at the end, it's like this being this potentially odd, cult, short-lived experiment to a primetime bonanza -- now time the Doctor has gone too far. It's time to die. There's an inevitable sense of justice with a Christmas Day slot! I think that's when we really set our eyes on the horizon, behind his final summons. and decided to go for it. All our ambition unfurled, properly -- me, Phil Collinson,

Julie, Ed, everyone. That's when the show became a long-term, life-absorbing, time-
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 11 AUGUST 2008 09:41:27 GMT
eating commitment. I think you can see it in that episode. We didn't have any extra
RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...money for it -- well, apart from having an extra 15 minutes' worth, because it's

an I'm in Manchester, but heading back to Cardiff tonight. Julie has worked her magichour long - but there's a massive size and boldness to that story. Aliens of London had with the schedule, and given me a slight reprieve, so I have until the end of August been trying to go that far, but I was still testing the boundaries. It's one thing to have to write a completely new Torchwood Episode 5. I think I've thought of a way to end a spaceship hit Big Ben, but once you've got the Prime Minister appearing on TV, it. We had the read-through of Episodes 1 to 3, which was half fun, half agonising.begging for the Doctor's help, then you're entering a completely different fictional Fun because I could see how much potential there is in this format, but agonisingworld - Doctor Who itself in a very new shape. And I loved that shape. Never looked because I'm not sure we're going to get there. I was surrounded by actors saying, 'Whatback. Yeah, love that episode. And that's without even mentioning David's arrival! happens to my character in the end?' I simply didn't know! Blah, blah, blah. It's the

usual
lurching from one crisis to another.FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 2008 13:59:26 GMT

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,
BUT... FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES
TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 12 AUGUST 2008 00:46:00 GMT

Yeah! My favourite moment from The Christmas Invasion was filming David's arrival
RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...on location at the Brandon Estate. The Tenth Doctor emerging from the TARDIS for Ooh, I knew I had something to tell you... I've read the very first time (David: 'I can't believe this! I'm inside the TARDIS!'), David doing Steven's first script! Series Five, Episode 1!his big speech - 'Here we are, then. London, Earth, the Solar System, I did it. Jackie!

Mickey! Blimey!' - in the middle of which an old man in a dirty mac wandered right
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 12 AUGUST 2008 00:55:49 GMTthrough the middle of shot! Everyone staring at him, open-mouthed... and as he RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...shuffled past Noel, this old bloke went, 'Bloody BBC. Full of poofs and homosexuals.'
DON'T JUST SAY THAT!!! What's it like? Is it brilliant? I bet it'sCompletely ruined the Doctor's big entrance! As David said afterwards, 'I like how he brilliant. Please say it's brilliant.specified poofs and homosexuals. Heaven forbid.'

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES			

actually
 that wasn't true of Chris or David. Jane was involved with the discussions, FROM:
 RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 12 AUGUST 2 008
 00:59:54 GMT but Julie made the actual offers. The change partly reflects
 how much bigger the role RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,
 BUT... of the Doctor has become since
 David took over. If the offer is huge, or if you've never It is BRILLIANT. Of course it is! I so
 want it to be a big success. I love Doctor Who, worked with the actor before, it's
 normal to approach the agent first. Julie and I asked and I love reading Steven's stuff best of
 all. It's a great story about... oh, I'm not going David before his agent got involved, and
 Julie asked Catherine to come back before to spoil it for you. Only a year or so to wait! You'll
 survive. But it's scary. approaching her agent, but that's because we had a
 working relationship with them

already.
 Even then, some agents could get prickly. It's always supposed to be agents FROM:
 BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 12 AUGUST 2008
 01:02:37 GMT first, so our very next words, as soon as we'd spoken to
 David, were And we'll phone RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,
 BUT... your agent first thing tomorrow.'
 That's not because agents are power-mad or anything. How
 scary? Imagine
 if David had hated us on Casanova, and thought what we'd done to Doctor

Who
was an embarrassment; it would have been very awkward for him to face us.
 An FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 12
 AUGUST 2008 01:03 :10 GMT agent protects you from that. (It's like
 when someone asks me direct to write a script. IRE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,
 BUT... hate that. I always tell them to go
 to my agent.) But with David, as with Catherine,
 we Very. were
 sure that we were on safe ground - with them as people, not just as actors - before

starting
 the conversation. FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY
 12 AUGUST 2008 01:04:44 GMT There are all sorts of other
 factors. What if Piers and Steven want to approach an RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,
 BUT... actor who has a movie profile?
 An actor who doesn't need the part so much? An actor How
 very? who
 won't bite off the BBC's hand? Or an actor whose agent is very film- and theatre-
 based,

who looks down on TV? It's surprising how many of them are like that. Also, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 12 AUGUST 2008 01:21:14 GMT

this
will all be so top-secret (so secret that I'm being told nothing at this stage), with RE: I ONLY
WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT... the
worry that a non-TV agent might not understand the sheer secrecy of DoctorMore news. I
forgot! We had proper interviews and everything- because Human Resources Who,
and will waft past the post boy and casually tell him, so it could be online
bymade us - and Tracie Simpson is now producer of the Doctor Who Specials.
HOORAY! tomorrow. (Do we get a press release ready?!) Well, she's doing
Easter 2009 and the final two-parter, and Nikki Smith - who's been »how do you
think, these days, playing the Doctor affects an actor's career?« Putin charge
of Series Two of The Sarah Jane Adventures, and who's absolutely lovely -- will simply,
it has the most enormous beneficial effects. Look at David! Remember him inproduce the
second 2009 Special, because a) Easter 2009 has to be finished so fast that 2005?
Stood in his pyjamas in Brentford? Or flashing his bum at the paparazzi onTracie will have to
sit right on top of post-production while the next Special is still being Barry Island? He's
just about the country's most famous man now -- apart from Davidfilmed, and b) Nikki really
deserves this. Good news. They'll both be wonderful. Beckham, and he's abroad.
For 99.999 per cent of actors, Doctor Who is the best

opportunity
in the world. FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 12
AUGUST 2008 01:25:41 GMT

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,
BUT... Text message
from: Russell

So, when does the search for the new Doctor begin? And how does that even
work? Sent: 12-Aug-2008 17:49 Who makes the offer? Is it
Piers? Or Steven? Or Jane Tranter? Do they hold auditions? I've got
Madonna living next door! She's staying at the St David'sTake prospective
candidates out for lunch? How did you do it with Chris and
David? Hotel for ten days while she rehearses her new
tour at the MillenniumAlso, these days, how do you think playing the Doctor affects an
actor's career? Any Stadium. This afternoon, we had a
helicopter buzzing the hotel!negatives?

Text
message from: Ben FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
TUESDAY 12 AUGUST 2008 01:48:52 GMT

Sent:
12-Aug-2008 18:02

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO,

BUT...

But has she sold out at the National Theatre? I think not. Depends who they choose. Normally, Jane would make an offer of this size, though

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES

Morvin, and Foon, and Mr Copper, distinctive, simple, archetypal, to make me **RED** **CHRISTMAS**

about them, but quickly. It sounds like a contradiction, but it isn't. These are Russell's notes on Phil Ford's Red Christmas treatment.

I get very little sense of what this creature is. 3 Or what it looks like. It kills some, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: JULIE GARDNER; GARY RUSSELL, THURSDAY 14 AUGUST 2008 00:38:3? GMT

but infects others. Surely the infection spreading is more interesting, more and more PHIL FORD'S RED CHRISTMAS

crewmembers on the loose? This is great. Really good stuff.

Big

problem: the Doctor cannot summon the TARDIS by remote control. Ever.

The base needs to be more primitive, and more distinct. More noble. Prouder. More

Bang go two-thirds of all stories, if he can! I know that's a bugger, and the Christmas unique. It's the very first base on Mars ever. It's not terraforming; surely the first real

tree is so effective, but... no. 4 God knows how to solve that, cos having the TARDIS Mars bases will just be there to examine, and do tests and things? (We need dates

on outside with all the spacesuits ripped is brilliant, but... no! that. When are they planned for, or just hoped for, in real life?) The science should

Julie predicted that this would be lacking in Christmas, and she's right. That's not be closer to ours. And the fact that Valentina is a Mars veteran spoils it somehow. 1

just detail to be filled in elsewhere. It's integral. This will always be lacking in Christmas This should be the first, first, first. If they're expedition number 16, it sort of

makes unless we tackle it now. Those video messages from home must become part of the the whole thing less epic. Think in headlines. The First Base! The First Pioneers! The

whole structure, the mood, the ethos of the thing. Bind them in, and then spin them, Brave! The Bold!

the tragedy in those messages, the love, the hope, the joy, the vital information,

For that reason, I don't like flying off to - or even the existence of- the algae farm. 2

the lies, the everything. They're not a detail. They're at the heart of it. This isn't a complex; it's one base. It should be wonderful, and central, and amazing.

A stray thought that I discussed in passing with Gary the other day... what if the Whether it's two domes or one, it should be simple and

central. That's tough, I know, Doctor knows that Bowie Base (which sounds better than Camp Bowie!) is the Famous but all that claustrophobia and trapped-ness will be brilliant. Of course, it needs to Lost Expedition. It's part of history. They all died. No one ever returned. By saving expand, to give us visuals and movement. We need a set-piece chamber, like the Strut them all at the end, the Doctor is defying the Laws of Time. When the Ood appears in Voyage of the Damned. An Oxygenation Chamber, full of CGI pistons, and levels, at the end, there's a sense, without quite saying it, that he's gone too far. He has been and spinning machines (okay, maybe a bit in advance of real science), in which the too arrogant, and Time is calling him in for his final story, in which he'll pay the price. Doctor will perform daring deeds, and CGI stunts, and save lives, and be amazing. An I know this is hard to reveal, because the Doctor is never going to turn around and FX-driven, stunt-driven, visual set-piece chamber. say to the crew of Bowie Base, 'Oh, you're all going to die.' He'd be a bit bonkers to

Okay, thinking about it some more... maybe some sort of algae farm could work do that, even in the worst circumstances, so I can't quite work out how to swing that (not for terraforming, just for food and air), but the story begins to work if it's 200 yet (without the Doctor looking at the TARDIS scanner and talking to himself, which yards away. If you can see it. If something has gone wrong, it closes down and seals itself doesn't work)... but just because something doesn't work immediately doesn't mean off, and no one inside will reply or can reply. They have to walk to the base, but with that it won't work ever. It's worth niggling at that idea. It makes things more epic, tension and scares. Maybe walk across the surface of Mars, or maybe walk through the more heart-felt. now-dark-and-undoubtedly-deadly tunnel that connects the two domes. Do you see So, this is a really, really good start - and a thousand times better than my last duff what I mean? The smaller and tenser this gets, the better it is. Cut all the sprawling, idea. You can see Phil starting to fly with this one, and that's fantastic. But it's not quite sci-fi shuttle sniff. Make these people and their situation more physical, more real. there yet. Sci-fi off-world episodes are so hard to write. They really are the toughest of

If we're seriously going to try for Helen Mirren, I'm not sure Valentina should be the lot. But once the base works, once it has a reality, a logic, a toughness, an integrity,

Russian. Helen Mirren was Russian in that 2010 film. She'd be unlikely to repeat then like the video messages, like the algae farm, like the Oxygen Chamber, like the

herself. Besides, a bit of British pluck would be wonderful here. They're odd beasts, creature, like Christmas, everything will tie together and become some sort of whole.

these Christmas ones. They're not subtle. We can let rip with the characterisation,

a This story is about the base. Work on the base, and
the story will lock into place, I
bit. We need to concentrate massively on Valentina, to put her at the centre. And
the promise.
other characters barely register. They're all a bit Crewman A and Crewman B.
These I think we should go for another treatment,
but we'll get there soon. It's very
characters have to a) not fill up much space, and b) be very distinct. They have to
be exciting.

There Is something In unrefined Martian water that the farmers have been
drinking unwittingly, Infecting them.¹ In Phil Ford's original treatment, set
on Christmas Eve 2079, Valentina Kerenski is the leader of the Mars base
(Camp

The unidentified creature has torn apart every spacesuit on the base -
Including the Doctor's - leaving him no wayBowie'), having been on the
first manned mission there in 2050 and several times since.

reach the TARDIS outside on the surface. With various cables and
adjustments, the Doctor uses the base's fake,² In the original treatment,
the agricultural team on Mars, based some distance away from 'Camp
Bowie', is cultivating plains

Christmas tree as a transmitter to signal to the TARDIS, transporting it into
'Camp Bowie' by remote control of algae that are slowly releasing oxygen
into the thin Martian atmosphere.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SIXTEEN: EVERYTHING CHANGES

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: JULIE GARDNER; GARY RUSSELL,
THURSDAY 14 AUGUST 2008 13:30:37 GMT

PHIL FORD'S RED
CHRISTMAS to go.' (Hey, is
he having an affair? Wait a goddamn minute! Is he glad to be gettingAlso! I was thinking
overnight... me out of the way?!)
I'm lucky to have him. He really is a saint. I've spent five years

Robots. A base robot. A clunky, very real sort of robot - all white metal with
black beetling between Manchester and Cardiff- and beetling less and less, staying in
Cardiffjoints, like real Japanese robots are these days. I'd think, like, a practical build. A
real instead, because it's easier - but all the time saying, 'Til be back home soon.' And
thenlittle thing, trundling around on caterpillar tracks, like Wall-E, with mechanical
arms I sit down and say, 'I'm moving to another country.' He really is the most
gracious,picking up soil outside, or offering crewmembers their turkey pill, or
whatever. kind man. He'd never try to stop me going. He can't move out there
- he's got a staff

But then, when it goes mad (and quite why it would go mad requires a lot of
work), job, like a job for life, he can't give that up on a whim - but he'll save up his
holidays,the arms can become CG, and whirr, and whizz, and spin, and cut, and be
terrifying. and come out for months at a time, and I'll be coming back lots. My
old dad is 83. It's

I love a robot! no
time to disappear. Besides, I'm still convinced that I'll get there, decide it's too hot,

and
come back within a fortnight.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
THURSDAY 14 AUGUST 2008 21:16:18 GMT

I'm trying not to
think about it too much. Times like this, with huge decisions, IRE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY
HELLO, BUT... don't think or talk
much. I sort of bob, like a cork - yes, Ben, like a cork - and seePhil Collinson sent me the most
beautiful e-mail today. He was in Cardiff, so I went which direction I float in. And
I'm floating west.for a coffee with him, and told him about LA. I voiced all my fears. Am I too
old? Is it

too mad? Is it wrong to go to America and start again, while worrying that I can't go
back to my same old Manchester life after all this? (It would just be too small.) Phil
sympathised, like you do, but then we saw a handsome man and changed the subject,
and then Phil had to go, so he got on the train. But then he sent me this e-mail:

/ can't stop thinking about what you'll do when IT'S over, as I chug interminably
*through the countryside. You're right to be worried. The time we've had is
amazing.*

The way Doctor Who has been so demanding of every living minute of energy, brain

power... the huge sacrifices made so easily... the sheer joy it gives back every day...

just the whole SIZE of it... all means that when you wake up the day after they've

dubbed your last episode, a huge hole is left behind. So, what I'm saying is, GO TO

LA! It'll be the perfect distraction, and just so huge and exciting and frightening and

wonderful. Not just the job of it, but the living in a strange country bit. And I'll have

somewhere else to stay when I visit...

Bless Phil for that. A huge hole is left behind.' How honest. I think that e-mail has made up my mind. He's right. I'm going.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 14 AUGUST 2008 23:05:04 GMT

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

You're going! You'd better have e-mail

in LA.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 15 AUGUST 2008 00:38:37 GMT

RE: I ONLY WROTE TO SAY HELLO, BUT...

I think LA will have e-mail. Call it a wild stab in the dark, but I think so.

I told my old fella about it at the weekend. There really should be a whole other book saying how marvellous he is. The absolute first thing he said was, 'You've got

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IN THE MIDNIGHT HOUR

INTERLUDE

Manchester home perfectly encompasses the two obsessions in his life: his writing, and cartooning. The hand-drawn theatre posters in the entrance hall are his own work, from the mid 1980s, when he designed the flyers for Cardiff's Sherman Theatre. For a long time, Russell wanted to be a graphic artist. As a kid, he loved

IN

THE Marvel comics and Charles M Schulz's Peanuts strips. On the wall in his front room is his prized possession: a framed Peanuts sketch autographed by Schulz himself. 'He was a genius,' says Russell of Schulz. "The rhythms of his jokes, the repetition,

MIDNIGHT

HOUR the silent third frame of four, the way that the punchline is immediately followed in the same frame by a follow-up line, which becomes an extra punchline in itself... oh, I use all of it. It's so ingrained. The day he died I was so sad.'

Russell gives DWM a guided tour of the house. It's surprisingly Who-lite. Okay, so there's the life-sized 1980s-style Dalek in the entrance hall ('I should get rid of that,' This interview with Russell, by Benjamin, was originally published in he says), the dozen or so toy Daleks that take up a whole shelf in his kitchen, and the *Doctor Who Magazine* 400, on 18 September 2008... complete set of Target novels in his office upstairs, but you're reminded that Doctor

Who represents just four years of a career in television that spans two decades. Russell In his most candid interview ever, Russell TDavies invites DWM readers into his landed his first proper writing and producing job, on children's magazine show Why Manchester home to reveal the truth about the 2009 Specials, lying in interviews, Don't You...?, in 1988. He can't quite believe that it was that long ago.

the darkest corners offandom, and 'twisty-turny, timey-wimey... His cluttered office is his personal sanctuary. 'It smells of cigarettes,' he apologises.

The walls are lined with hundreds of files, books, videotapes and DVDs. Next to the computer, on his desk, is a signed photo of Andrew Hayden-Smith. It was acquired,

'E very year, you wait for it to fail. Every year, you wait for the ratings to die, because no good luck lasts forever, no matter how hard you work insists Russell, long before the former CBBC presenter was cast in Doctor Who as Jake

at it.' That, says Russell T Davies, is why now is the right time for him Simmonds. The office walls are adorned with photos commemorating Russell's earlier

to quit Doctor Who, the show that he was responsible for resurrecting work - from short-lived, early-1990s ITV daytime soap Families, to 1999's Queer as

in 2005, after a 16-year hiatus, and turning into a commercial and *Folk, the Channel Four series about gay men living in Manchester, which first put*

critical success. 'It's achieved everything that I wanted it to, and more. Russell on the map.I've pushed it as far as I can. It's time for a completely new eye on it.' 'I used to be a very florid writer,' he says, lighting a cigarette back downstairs in the

After this year's Davies-penned Christmas Special, set in Victorian London and living room. It's the first of several that he'll smoke during our three-hourinvolving the Cybermen, he'll oversee just four more Specials in 2009 (the first two of conversation. 'My God, you should watch The Grand,' he says of the hotel-set periodwhich he's co-writing, and the final two he's scripting alone), before Steven Moffat drama that he wrote in the 1990s. 'Talk about Baroque! But I'd had a soap training,takes over as showrunner for Series Five in 2010. 'It feels like I've got other things to in which it's every character's job to stand there and tell us everything that they'redo,' says Russell. 'Four years just feels good. It feels right, I think. I'm absolutely thinking, usually in lists of three adjectives. I knew that it wasn't working. I knewalways thinking that I must get out before I get bored of it. They did ask me to do a that I was in a stylistic dead-end. Literally, I taught myself how to write better. Infifth series,' he reveals. 'I think that's when I realised for sure that I just didn't want to Episode 16 of The Grand, I had Steven, the posh son, finishing his engagement withdo it.'

Christina. Such an empty character,' he adds, laughing. 'I called her Christina

It's 2pm, on 20 August 2008. Russell has been up since first light, in his house in Wyndham-Price, because it rhymed with "plot device".the Victoria Park area of Manchester, working on the script to Episode 5 of the third "That scene was a massive breakthrough for me,' he continues. 'They started the series of Torchwood, which will run on BBC One next spring. In this house, he wrote scene happy; five pages later, the engagement was off, and not once did either of them all of his Doctor Who scripts up to and including Series Three opener Smith and Jones. use the word "engagement" or say "I love someone else" or "it's over". I pared back allHe prefers writing here to his Cardiff residence, where work dictates that he spends those words and phrases, because they didn't need saying. Both characters just knewmost of his year. Not for much longer, though. what was happening. They realised it during the scene. Honestly, that scene

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changed the path of my whole career. I wrote better from that point on. Not that he's been lying in previous interviews, you understand... or has he? He

"That led directly to *Queer as Folk*, which is the ultimate in not saying what's grins. Lying can be good. That and being able to read upside-down. I've spent my actually going on. Ten episodes of a love story, ten episodes of Vince in love with career reading documents upside-down on people's desks and it's got me an awful Stuart, and I never had Vince say, "I love you." Never. Writing is, equally, what you long way, let me tell you. But if I'm honest about my writing... well, I've realised *don't write. I think that's why Queer as Folk succeeded. The audience felt involved*, that I don't care what people say about my scripts, because I criticise them on levels because they had to work hard. They weren't being given everything on a plate. I that they'll never even touch. They might criticise my decisions, or the way that I remember shooting one of the opening scenes, where Hazel is running after Bernie, lead my life, or the speed at which I write, which I bet will come in for some shouting, "It's only a t-shirt!" - which is never explained. Everyone - actors, crew, criticism, but you might as well wish that I were blonde, or shorter, or not Welsh. 'extras' - was wondering what she was going on about. Pam Tait, the costume designer, said, "This script isn't just minimal, it's gnomic." I think that's one of my best

compliments.' K nowing that he's leaving Doctor Who helped Russell put 'a bit more energy'

his Series Four scripts. 'It made them more muscular if anything. In some into

it took the pressure off. It was bold, all the different directions that we ways,

B efore we continue, your intrepid DWM reporter has something to declare. In February 2007, Russell and I entered into a correspondence, a pretty-much-daily exchange of e-mails, that continued for more than a year and has been

this year. If *Midnight*, for example, had been the greatest disaster in the went in

of the world, I wouldn't have cared. If people had said, "That was terrible, all history

were bored," it wouldn't have mattered. I'd still be happy with it... whereas if collected together in a book, called *Doctor Who: The Writer's Tale*, which is I'd been signed up for a fifth year, I'd really have been questioning my judgement. published by Ebury this month. It's like a year-long interview with Russell T Davies. As it happens, the *Midnight* gamble paid off: a 45-minute slice of prime time It's

all there: courting Kylie Minogue, signing up Catherine Tate, turning down family drama, featuring a small cast on a single, claustrophobic set, with minimal Series Five, the search for Russell's successor... special effects, was watched by over eight million people, helping Series Four to

I've been asked to write a book about writing a few times before,' explains Russell, achieve some

of Doctor Who's highest ratings this century. Of course, had the show but I'm wary of a lot of the books out there, the ones that simply teach technique averaged a weekly audience of three million (I'd have died on my arse,' chips in without any passion. They're all theory... whereas I like your description of our book Russell), no doubt he'd be sat here now reminding us that the BBC shouldn't be as the diary that answers back. Yes, with you as the diary! It's the perfect format. It's chasing ratings, that Doctor Who is a fine piece of public-service broadcasting, and writing in action.' that plenty of fantastic shows don't attract huge audiences...?

For someone better known nowadays by his PR face, his 'Marvellous' side, the 'Very true,' he says, with a chuckle, 'except Doctor Who is absolutely designed to be hoorayf-studded rhetoric of countless Doctor Who Confidential! and breakfast TV seen by everyone. Yes, I'd argue the opposite if we hadn't got the ratings... but the interviews, the Russell T Davies of The Writer's Tale is surprisingly frank. It's full of BBC wanted us slap bang at the heart of the schedule, when they thought that angst and self-doubt. No more Mr Marvellous... ? 'I think that's the only way to talk Saturday nights weren't working.' He's referring to the dark days of 2004, before about writing. I knew I had to break myself open in order to be honest about scripts. *Doctor Who had transformed the television landscape. 'Everything I've ever worked* It's fascinating to see Julie [Gardner, executive producer] and Phil [Collinson, on, I've wanted ten million people watching. Well, I've finally got it. Every year, I've producer] read it, because they know me very well, but even they had no idea of set myself these targets, which I've never talked about before in case we fail. Let's face what I go through. it, one day the ratings will sink back down. But we're meant to be getting millions.

'I think I've realised, more concretely than ever before, that I'll never be happy. I We're meant to be beating ITV. We're not making a drama about Solidarity in think that's quite positive, that I'm always worried, that I always think the next script Poland, or the Gulf War; it's just very powerful entertainment. I can't believe that is going to kill me, that I always think I'll never get there. I take a slight comfort in some people still don't watch Doctor Who! I find that mad. They're idiots. that now, as I face a million more deadlines. It's like therapy. After Steven Moffat had *DWM wonders where the current success of Doctor Who leaves Russell's successor.* read our book, he e-mailed me saying, "I thought you just sat there typing all day, In taking over from Russell, is the challenge facing Steven greater to the one that laughing." I imagined he did that, too. In a way, all writers are the same. Well, good Russell faced in bringing back the show in 2005? I'm absolutely confident that writers. It's a cry for solidarity. We're all tearing our hair out, living with a massive whatever Steven is planning will be brilliant,' rattles off Russell. But he's sidestepping pressure. If I use my "publicity voice"... well, that's too easy now. It's a lie.'

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the question. DWM tries again. Isn't Steven's dilemma that he'll want to make his *is a competition, frankly. It's honest-to-God rivalry, and I like that. It fuels everyone* mark on the show, and yet Russell has already hit upon a formula that patently works? to keep going.' But the strongest motivator, he says, is his fear of letting down Doctor Well... yes,' replies Russell, 'it's hard, isn't it? I think that's what people will say to him - *Who's cast and crew...* that it's harder, because he's got to replicate success. I think that's what will be said, 'When you've got David [Tennant] there, and Catherine Tate has agreed to give up and I think he won't care. He's too clever to worry about that. a whole year of her life, that's the greatest pressure of all. I couldn't look them in the

'When I was bringing it back, people told me, "It'll never work." Every single year, eye if we're not doing them proud. That's been the benefit of changing our cast every

The Guardian has called it "the make-or-break series". They're always ready for it to year - which wasn't the plan, but I loved that in the end. Every year, if the show had

fail, and there's a great joy in proving them wrong. I bet Steven is discovering that joy failed, the press would have blamed the new cast member, and we must never, never

already. Besides, a lot of what I've done with the show is common sense, like having a allow that to happen. That's a fantastic pressure on everyone to keep up the standard.

season finale. It's not like I invented the season finale. I would bet my back teeth that It wouldn't have mattered if they'd been given rubbish scripts, or had terrible sets, or

Steven's seasons will build to some sort of twisty-turny, timey-wimey climax. You know bad directors; the press would have looked at the face on screen and said that it's the

how he loves laying clues and pulling tricks on the viewers. His writing is so complex, newcomer's fault. They'd have said that Catherine had destroyed Doctor Who, or

so structured, so clever, so thought-through... Freema [Agyeman], or David.'

'Plus, no matter what I did to the format, it's still a man in a police box, who turns In his Foreword to The Writer's Tale, Philip Pullman describes Russell as

up in a different place every week and has an adventure. Honestly, fundamentally, I 'pugnacious, and rightly so, when faced with narrow-minded prejudice', highlighting

didn't change a thing. I just fine-tuned the parts of the formula that interested me, in particular 'the relentless and merciless idiocy of internet "criticism"'. How does

like the role of the companion. Steven writes very different episodes to mine, but they Russell regard the adverse reaction, in some quarters, to Catherine Tate's casting in

fit beautifully into that format. So what's to worry about? Nothing, really.' Series Four? 'I think it's a bit horrific,' he confesses. 'Of course people are free to say

Last December, Russell and Steven met up in London for coffee and a chat. 'I whatever they want, but it seems that they're even freer when the subject is a

remember going to this meeting bristling with things to say. I had a million things to successful woman. Successful women are considered to be fair game, especially by

tell him, about BBC Wales, BBC Drama, how to handle the publicity, all that sort of female columnists. Women beware women. That's the truest phrase ever said.

stuff... and I remember, vividly, the moment I sat down, I thought, I don't need to 'The problem is that a lot of journalists go online to find their material, quoting

tell him any of this. He knows it already. He's produced shows before. We actually had the internet forums and that area of fandom that reacts as if the world is ending, as

very little to say. I've told him that he can phone me at any time, but I bet he won't.' though by casting Catherine we're destroying the show. That's embarrassing, quite

Is Russell secretly hoping that he will? 'No, because I hate it when people phone up frankly. To be absolutely blunt, it's the only moment in my entire four years that I

and ask for advice,' he smiles. 'Experience counts for nothing. I might give him bad was actually ashamed of fandom. I'm not talking about fandom full stop; I'm talking

advice, and then I'll look like an idiot.' about those dark corners that react in that way. As if we didn't know what we were

doing!

After four years! All of us - Julie, Phil, David, all of us - were utterly confident

of

what a fine actress Catherine is and how brilliant she would be. The proof is there

G et Russell talking about the state of television today, and he's quick to denounce

what he describes as 'so-bad-it's-popular programming', citing such shows as *Rock Rivals* and *Hotel Babylon*. 'I find that sort of TV mystifying,' he says, 'and

in 14 episodes. She's every bit as magnificent as I promised she would be.'

the past, Russell has insisted that he never goes online to read what people are

cynical, actually. I don't understand the cynical heart that makes those things.' He's saying about him. But this isn't true, is it? 'Now and again, I have a look,' he admits.

more charitable towards the increasing number of aspirants to Doctor Who's crown, But I don't do it constantly. I wonder if Steven does? My boyfriend's a civil servant, so

such as *Primeval* ('a great show -- it did very well for ITV') and the BBC's new he sits at a computer all day, every day, and sometimes he goes online over lunch. I

Saturday teatime drama *Merlin* ('a really, really fine piece of work'). The producers of ask him, "What are they saying?" He says, "They're slagging you off again." But I

both shows have talked openly of their debt to Doctor Who, with *Merlin* even refuse to take it personally. 'I'd die if I did.' What's the worst thing that he's read about

including a "Thanks to Russell T Davies" acknowledgment on the end credits. himself online? "That I'm lazy. That always gets me. Fair enough if you don't like

'Merlin is the first proper rival to Doctor Who that I've seen,' says Russell, 'and that's what I do... but lazy?! It's a ridiculous view of television. It's an assumption that we're

my finest compliment. I think it does us good to have rivals snapping at our heels. It all swanning around in chauffeured limousines, drinking champagne. That

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annoys me. It's facile. But it doesn't annoy me for long, I know I'm not lazy.' were repeated today, I'd still sit and watch it and have a good time. It has that very

Is life behind the scenes on Doctor Who really as cosy and controversy-free as the handsome man in it, Mark Greenstreet [Ikona]... dressed as a lizard, admittedly! But people who work on it make out? 'I know that some people think that Doctor Who there's something good about every episode.' *Magazine is sort of cheerleading when you report that everything's nice and happy,'* he Has he overseen any real clangers during his tenure? "There probably have been considers, 'and it's human nature to want to know great, dark secrets... but c'mon, look, weaker episodes in the past four years, but now, for me, it's hard to see which ones. we work hard to create a comfortable working atmosphere. I'm sorry if people don't It's probably my fault if an episode is weak. I mean, okay, we all talk about Aliens of like that, but you know what? Tough shit.' *London with a slightly regretful tone, because we were learning, we'd never worked*

with
prosthetics before, and the schedule was impossible... well, do you know, I

D WM invites Russell to whet our appetites for the forthcoming 60-minute

Specials. The Christmas one is shot already ('It has a very exciting title,' he says, 'which may or may not get people up in arms'), and next year's Specials will

watched
it on BBC Three the other night - and what a classic episode! The Doctor's in

Downing
Street. A spaceship flies into Big Ben. Penelope Wilton [Harriet Jones] is

watching
Slitheen murder people. Frankly, it's brilliant. If I'm absolutely honest, I

commence production in January. 'They're all very different. They're all very think some fans don't yet realise how good these last four years have been. And it'll

colourful. They hit the ground running.' When asked about settings, he says, 'There be just as fantastic once Steven has taken over...'

are at least two alien planets, maybe more.' What about returning aliens? Here he By which time, Russell will be riding off into the sunset. No tears, no regrets, just

chooses his words carefully: 'I would say... how can I put this? Two new monsters... Allons-y, straight ahead and out, press the button, dematerialise, new planet - next

no, three! Yes,
three. stop, everywhere! Isn't
he going to miss this show? 'No,' he says first off, but then he

'The Doctor is travelling alone. Each story will have a different companion, a considers the question. 'Julie worries sometimes. The sheer size of this show... Iwoman or a man of the week to team up with, some great guest casting... and it won't suppose it's hard to imagine just going back to Manchester, and sitting there writingalways be a young girl.' In the Christmas Special, it's David Morrissey, playing 'a a six-parter... because the next thing I write will go out at nine o'clock, it'll be anbrilliant character'. And just to confirm - is David Tennant staying on for all five adult drama, it'll get three million viewers, and there won't be half as much fussSpecials? 'Yes, every single one. He is the Doctor.' about it. It won't get a Radio Times cover. I'll miss the size of the job, I think. I'll miss

In each of his annual end-of-series interviews with DWM, Russell has spoken of the the energy that goes into it, actually. The creativity.show's future with the same mix of bravado and enthusiasm that's marked every stage "Then again, I worry for my health. I mean, doing that book with you, seeing itof his career. This time around, however, the question is how Russell's next project can written down, the day-to-day workings of this show... I do think, I'm 45 now, thatpossibly top Doctor Who? Will the next thing he writes simply not be as good? "The number of late nights, with that amount of smoking, with that amount of coffee,next thing I write will just be different,' he reasons. 'It'll be like I learnt nothing from seriously, that's not good.' He stubs out his cigarette as he says: 'I'd like to see 55.*Doctor Who. You do just start again with every show.' He's rumoured to be planning a* That'd be nice.six-part drama known only - 'ridiculously,' he says - as More Gay Men. 'I don't know But each new drama creates it's own new world, and it's own problems, and Iwhat it's about, just gay men. There's probably a 40-year-old gay man, and maybe a know that'll fill my head,' he says. Til be looking at the latest issues of Doctor Who20-year-old gay man, not an affair, just the different generations. I think they both *Magazine, going, "Hey, didn't I used to work on that show, way back...?"*"work in the same office.' Same time next year, then, Russell? For now, he says nothing. He just smiles. He

Will Russell write for TV's Doctor Who again? 'No, I'm looking forward to watching knows what we're thinking. Yeah, maybe we won't see him for dust.it as a viewer, for the first time in 21 years. I can't wait.' What if one day there's an episode that he doesn't like? Has he forgotten what that feels like? Will he be on the Reproduced with kind permissioninternet within minutes, registering his complaint? 'Oh, but I've always loved Doctor

Who, even during those periods when it was considered to be terrible... let's say Time and the Rani, which was the first episode I ever saw in Manchester, actually,

on a

black-and-white portable. It was probably better in black-and-white.' It was still shit, though, wasn't it? 'It was a low moment, but no way did I stop watching. No way did I ever give up on Sylvester McCoy. If Time and the Rani

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CHAPTER SEVENTEEN
BEST-LAID
PLANS

In which Torchwood: The Musical is considered,
Chris Moyles turns out to be extraordinarily lovely,

and Russell and Benjamin go on tour

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 23 AUGUST 2008 16:20:26 GMT

CANAL STREET

It's Manchester Pride this weekend. I'm avoiding it. I've too much work to do. Although,

they've an AIDS vigil on Monday night - which is rather beautiful, all candlelit in the

park in the middle of Canal Street - so I promised to go to that.

On Friday morning, I had to walk down Canal Street, because I was on my way to

do an interview for one of the gay magazines. Canal Street was deserted. I hadn't set

foot there in years. I haven't been clubbing there at night for, ooh, about four or five

years, I think. Since Doctor Who, really. Lots of new bars. Old bars with new names.

I thought, blimey, I used to own this place. Honestly, after Queer as Folk, it was like I

knew everyone there. That place was my life. I wish I'd realised that at the time. Now,

I am the past. It was a trip down memory lane. So many bars that I got pissed in. So

many dark corners. All plain and ordinary in the daylight.

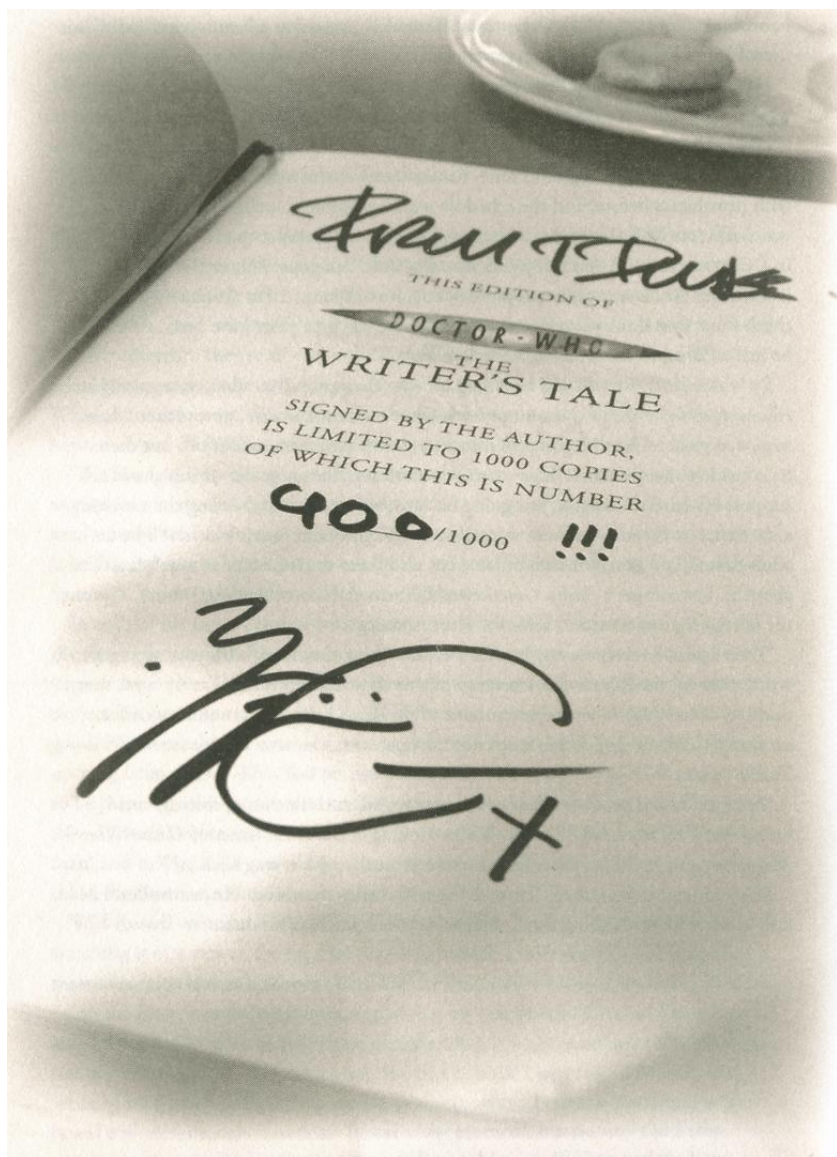
By the time I left the interview hours later, they were starting to erect the barriers for

Pride, and the bars were filling up, and it was sunny, so lots of beautiful and not-so-

beautiful boys were sitting outside, so I had another stroll up and down. Within ten

minutes, I'd bumped into five or six people. The same five or six people I used to bump

into in 2000! I thought, 'God, they're all still here.' Older, fatter, thinner on top, but



the same old faces. It made me feel glad that I've moved on and done different things.

It would have been so easy to stay there, and write gay scripts for the rest of my life.

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Enough reminiscing! I just watched an assembly of the first week's filming on huge that paying them all off in the final episode is the hardest job I've ever had, let *Torchwood*, and it's marvellous. That was a nice surprise. Euros is so brilliant. That alone defeating the bastard alien. The alien is making demands. For the third episodeshow has never looked better. It's nice to hear those characters saying my dialogue in a row. I hate aliens.again. So, that's cheered me up. It's inspired me, actually. It's spurred me on to get

Episode 5 right. Not that I've written a word yet, of course.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2008 02:15:08 GMT

Meanwhile, Julie, Andy and I have been talking casting for the Doctor Who Easter **RE: BACK IN CARDIFF...**Special. Tricky. Sexy cat burglar? There aren't many actors who can carry that off. But How's Torchwood coming along? Any better?the fact that it's proving so hard to cast has made me wonder: a cat burglar and a bus?

Isn't that a clash? Just as bad as a hotel and a dogfight? Cat burglars don't get on buses. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2008 02:29:17 GMT

Well, glamorous, posh ones don't. In fairness, Gareth has already wondered aloud **RE: BACK IN CARDIFF...**about this. 'Make it work,' I said. But while he's

working away on the script, it's kept Not bad at the moment, dare I say. I read an interview with Alan Moore recently, inticking away in my head. I haven't told Gareth this, I'm letting him keep typing, but which he said - I'm paraphrasing - 'When you're young, you plan everything. As youthe thought has been growing and growing for weeks now. The clash of styles inherent get more experienced, you fly on instinct. That means putting things in scripts thatin those decisions. The clash of genres. Good clash or bad clash? Two sides, fighting you've go no idea why they're there, but as you work at it, as you write, they rise up,each other. How far have we wandered since our days of shop girls and ordinary

lives they assert themselves, they become more and more vital, like they were always meantconnecting with the Doctor? How far have we wandered from our original brief, back to be there.' Less mystically, what he means is, you use ideas once you've created them,in 2004? I had a nice chat with Jane Tranter the other day, and she was reminiscing you work at them and bind them in. And tonight's one of those nights...about World War Three, and how much she loved Downing Street intercutting with the

Back in Episode 3, I gave lanto's sister a makeshift creche, for no good reason -- ITylers' council flat. It's her absolute favourite episode, the one that she keeps referring just thought it livened up ordinary domestic scenes, made the house noisy and fun,back to. It's the essence of Doctor Who, for Jane. But a jewel thief? A character who's gave her not-much-story-husband more to do ('Ten quid a kid!'), and helped spell outnever actually existed in the real world, ever? It gets those alarm bells ringing. the whole Children of Earth theme. (That's what we're calling this series, Torchwood:

The other day, I thought, what if we make this Companion of the Week the sort *Children of Earth.*) Nice idea, that's all. But tonight, oh, tonight - like a bolt of woman who would get on a bus? Never mind posh Hermione; what if she's plain lightning, the thought went 'OH!!!' in my head - the creche has become spectacular, Eileen? Played by someone like Kathy Burke! I love Kathy Burke. Or Brenda Blethyn. and vital, and epic, and potentially brilliant. Like I'd carefully seeded that in, way back Or maybe Gwen Taylor. That sort of actor. Classy, heartfelt, down-to-earth. Instant in Episode 3. I hadn't, I was just having fun, but something in my head must have connection with the audience. The most ordinary housewife in the world, teamed up worked at it until it was staring me in the face. with the Doctor. Scene 1, she's at home with her dull husband, Trevor. He's reading That's why, I realise, Torchwood has been so painful, because that's how I work now, out the horoscopes. She says, 'Read mine.' He says, 'When's your birthday?' And she's very much on instinct. This one story has been spread across three writers, demanding almost in tears. She's lived with this man for ten years. He doesn't know when her that it's planned in detail, in advance, so it's been split across three minds, and that sort of birthday is. She's crying as she goes out of the door, going to the shops, and she gets flourishing hasn't been possible. It's only now that I'm pulling it all together and making on the bus (do you see? She fits the story!)... and there's the Doctor, and... how good it my own again that the synapses are firing. Connections are being made. But mark the

moment,

because I don't often say it: right now, I'm happy. would that be?!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2008 00:34:40 GMT
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2008 02:30:08 GMT

RE:

BACK

IN

CARDIFF...

RE: BACK IN

CARDIFF...I'm dying here. I'm on Page 8 of this Torchwood Episode 5 script. You know how fast I'm documenting that for The Writer's Tale 2. ('This time, it's personal!') It's 2.30am, I write - you know better than anyone - but this time it's taken me four days to reach on 4 September, and Russell T Davies is writing... and he's happy! Ha ha ha. It won't Page 8! I had the worst night's sleep in years last night. It was nightmarish, with images last. When's Episode 5 due in, then? Wasn't it the end of August? of Jack, and Gwen, and Ianto (not in a good way), and Peter Capaldi, swimming

about. Seriously, their faces looming in my head. Their disappointment! This cast is so

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SEVENTEEN: BEST-LAID PLANS

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2008 02:55:10 GMT

there for something that important. Julie said it was okay.

He was just fine. SimplyRE: BACK IN
CARDIFF...

that.
It's an actor's life, isn't it? I had a word with him later, at the read-through, andIt was due on 30 June. No kidding. Christ, I've made this production a mess. Yet again. he was fine, and happy, and smiling. He keeps himself to himself, but I'm sure he's all

There, now I'm unhappy again. right. Funny to think of lanto gone, though. The man who was so bright and chirpy

the very first episode of Torchwood, flirting instinctively with Jack before he evenFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2008 02:58:21 GMT

what that really meant, now cut down in his prime by an alien bastard. Hey, thisRE: BACK IN
CARDIFF...

stuff
is real to me!I told you it wouldn't last. Look, it's almost 3am, and the e-mails are still coming in from Julie, who's out in LA

the moment. It's teatime out there.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2008 23:55:30 GMT

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2008 02:41:19 GMTRE: BACK IN
CARDIFF...

If we didn't have this photo shoot in London tomorrow, I'd stay up and finish this RE: BACK IN CARDIFF...*Torchwood script.1* Yes, finish. But I'm knackered. I'll have to go to bed soon, or you That'll be you in nine months' time. It'll be 3am here in the UK, and you'll only justand the Dalek will have your picture taken next to a living corpse. So, I'll have to be settling down for an evening's work in LA. Oh my God, I'll have to e-mail you atfinish this over the weekend. But the end is in sight. And the rushes continue to be 3am! That'll be a bit different! Imagine that! Um...marvellous. Wait till you see Captain Jack's daughter taking out a government assassin

with a breadboard in her back garden! I think this series might work.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 8

RE:

BACK IN CARDIFF...FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2008

01:28:15 GMT

It's done! Torchwood sinks slowly into the west. I must stop typing now. My letter 'a'**RE: BACK IN CARDIFF...** has broken. I have to reinsert the 'a' manually every time I want to use it. 'Manually'One page to go. ONE!!! But then I've got to go back and fix a lot of stuff, and cut a was a right hassle. Good night.lot. It's too long and too expensive. Same old same old, in other words. But hey, yes,

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2008 10:45:02 GMTthe production team will wake up tomorrow to find Episode 5 in their inboxes. The

story is complete at last, after all these months. I think it hangs together. There's a **RE: BACK IN CARDIFF...**great climax, which has nine pages

without a single word of dialogue, so I'm rather If you want to cut down on vowels, perhaps you could e-mail me in Welsh. Or youpleased with that. But imagine the read-through! I'll have to read out all those stage could just buy a new keyboard. Yeah, do that. Hey, did you ever do that interviewdirections! You up to anything exciting? about your desk with... was it the Observer Magazine? Did you find enough to talk

about

Were they impressed with your Cassandra action figure and waning keyboard?FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2008 01:37:19 GMT

RE: CARDIFF...

BACK

IN

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2008 11:19:54 GMT

No. No, I'm not. I'm hanging out my washing to dry. You, on the other hand, are **RE: BACK IN CARDIFF...**killing lanto. (You bastard.

Etc.) How did Gareth David-Lloyd take the news? It ws odd, tht interview. They kept trying to put things on my desk tht hve never,

ever

been there. I kept sying, 'But tht's not wht it's like.' My desk just wsn't interestingFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2008 02:39:55

GMT

enough! 'Hve you got something from Queer s Folk?' they wondered. 'No,' I sid. In**RE: BACK IN CARDIFF...** the

end, we hd to tlk bout the view. It might not be their most thrilling insight intolanto doesn't even make it to Episode 5. He's dead at the end of Episode 4. Poor lanto. a writer -Julie and Pete told Gareth the news, in London. I

was mid-rewrite, or I'd have been OOH, I'VE FIXED THE 'A'!!! LOOK!!! I hit it really hard, and it worked. Oh,

brilliant. (That's the most exciting thing to happen all morning. I'm weeping.)¹ On Friday 5 September. Russell and Benjamin were photographed in London, with a Dalek, for The Times.

the photographer from The Observer said, "The editor of American Vogue

so excited that I'm meeting you. I've done George Clooney and Isabella Rosselini,

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following realised that I had this stupid smile on my face. Torchwood finished, Gareth and Phil

writing
without me, and I'm not about to start rewriting yet (I'm having thoughtsSpecial? It's set on the Mars base, right? Put Kathy Burke or Brenda Blethyn or Gwen

about
those scripts, for when I take them over, but nothing concrete), so I'm happy.Taylor into the middle of that, as a greasy mechanic wielding a spanner and... no, that

This
leads me to conclude that writing = unhappiness, therefore why do I work sodoesn't really work, does it?

hard?
What is it, punishment? Why not stay happy? But I won't follow that thought.

I might
stop smiling.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2008 00:12:12 GMT

RE: 4.15

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2008 18:40:58 GMTNo.

RE: 4.15

»I'm
having thoughts about those scripts, for when I take them over«FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2008 00:14:23 GMT

Shouldn't
you share your thoughts with Gareth and Phil? Or is that going to delay**RE: 4.15**

their
writing? Or risk derailing them?Thought not.

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2008 18:49:00 GMTFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2008 23:10:06 GMT

RE:

4.15RE: 4.15

I think
it's easier - meaning an easier life for me - if I just leave Gareth and Phil aloneWe had a script meeting with Gareth for 4.15 in London today, on the Sixth Floor of

for now.
Although, one thing that keeps growing in my head for Christmas on Mars isTV Centre. I love the Sixth Floor. It's just what you expect TV to be like - all smart

that
robot, the little drone, pottering about on the planet. I've been to see Wall-E, andand swish, with classy, uncomfortable settees. But before I could see Gareth, Jane

grabbed me, pulled me into a little glass office, and told me the news. (You're going to 1 m inspired. We could make this thing really cute, and mechanical, and important.love this.)

The plan is... for David to announce that he's leaving live at the National 2 David Tennant was nominated for Outstanding Drama Performance at the National Television Awards 2008, for his role in

Catherine Tate was also a nominee in this category. The annual awards are broadcast live on ITV.

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Who doesn't love a cute robot? (Cue the voice of the internet! Point proven, thank
Text message from: Benyou.) I think we can do something brilliant with that. Our own K-9! I wonder how
Sent: 18-Sep-2008 09:50much it costs to actually build a real, moving, gizmo-armed little thing. I want to try.
My friends are questioning my choice of footwear. Since when are

trainers

4.15

Sent: 18-Sep-2008 09:54 Yes, Christina is brilliant, but if there's

Nicola Shindler was watching,

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2008 10:25:32 GMT

RE: THE TIMESinstinctive. Adrenalin is good. Still, Andy Pryor has put on

apropos the Voyage of the Damned press launch

massive Doctor Who

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2008 20:34:47 GMT

RE: THE TIMESthe cover, too. And they've made an additional news story

I stand by my previous statement. Bloody

oldest and bestest friend since I was 11. She practically is Rose

from Bob & Rose. I gave AS THE ELEVENTH DOCTOR WHO! It looks like the Russell Tovey thing will her a copy of the book last week, then out of the blue she sent this to me: provide the bulk of the press speculation, at least for today. *It's fantastic. But it made my cry, too. I was learning about you. How hard it's been.*

A

separate life. You must have your own subtle knife to cut between worlds.

Thank FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2008 11:33:07 GMT you for being my friend. RE: THE

TIMES In the whole 34 years I've known her, Tracy has never said anything like that. SheI texted Russell Tovey to warn him. He thought it was all very funny, and sent his mum doesn't even talk like that! It's lovely, but really threw me. When I say to you, 'I don't out to buy a copy of The Times, so he's fine with it all. He texted again a few minutes tell anyone this stuff,' I bet you think, 'Yeah, apart from your best mates and things.' ago: 'Whoa!! It's everywhere!' Poor Russell Tovey. But no. There's the proof.

I've only just bought The Times myself. It took me this long to pluck up the courage.

It looks good (nice photos, too), but it's weird seeing that serialisation. I feel sort of... FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2008 20:43:21 GMT

naked. (I'm not.) Like it's me sort of exposed. I never tell anyone anything about RE: THE TIMES what I'm thinking, and now there it is in a national newspaper. A book seems more Its a funny old way to reach your best friends, by publishing a book about yourself. contained and controlled, but when you see it in newsprint... I read it for about ten Proves what a media creature you are! What do your family think? seconds, then ran away, and ate, and smoked a lot. Yikes. Still. Scary is good.

Hey, we're live on BBC Breakfast tomorrow. No staying out late tonight! We've got

3

Former Secretary of State for Defence Geoff Hoon was, at this time. Chief Whip of the House of Commons. He became the to sparkle. Yes, Ben, sparkle. Secretary

of State for Transport in October 2008, a post he held until June 2009.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SEVENTEEN: BEST-LAID PLANS

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2008 20:56:59
GMT don't know how excited we get by coverage like that, especially on a
show like SarahRE: THE
TIMES Jane,
which has to fight to be seen. Lots of texts and e-mails flying about this morning. My family? God knows. They don't even know about it yet. I never tell them a thing. Nikki saying, 'Have you seen today's RT?!' Julie demanding, in capitals, 'GET ME

A
COPY! And ten minutes later: 'OH, IT'S BRILLIANT.' Everyone is thrilled. It's I got a text off my sister this morning: 'Have you got a book coming out?' Whoops. I

lovely.
And you mentioned my mum.5 Which made me cry. It was so sudden and did mean to say something. Honest.

unexpected,
it just got to me.

Oh, and today Andy Pryor came back with a list of who's free to play Eileen, and

By
the way, we're not giving up on the NTA plan. Julie said, 'What if we ask then one of the names excited us all that much - all the lovely, clever actors of a certain age

NTAs
for help? A prerecord? They could play an insert of David announcing his were booked up ages ago -- so this means CHRISTINA LIVES! I'm really, really glad,

departure?'
But that's risky. A prerecorded tape is asking to be leaked. We've dealt actually. She's a great character.

with
the NTA people before, and they're hugely trustworthy, but that information is dynamite.

And that's if he wins, which they won't know until the night itself. We couldFROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2008 18:23:05 GMT

have
a prerecord that never gets used! (Great DVD extra.)RE: THE TIMES
Tomorrow, I'm on Radio Berkshire. What went wrong?

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2008 17:23:10 GMT

RE:

RADIO TIMESFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2008 18:41:16 GMT

Can't
you do one of those live links to the theatre, timed to coincide with the interval?
RE: THE

TIMES

(Isn't
Hamlet off stage for a good while?) Or is that too risky? So many ways for it
toDon't worry. This morning, I was interviewed for What's On Birmingham, to
promote go wrong, I suppose.our book signing there next month. My 15
minutes of fame are over. In another

couple of days, we'll be sat in our respective homes, unshaven and penniless,
watching

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2008 20:19:48
GMTVHS recordings of our BBC Breakfast interview over and over, and e-mailing
each

RE: RADIO TIMESother about the 'good ol' days' when we used
to be on the telly. We'll be like Cannon They could get a live link backstage
at Hamlet, and time his award for the interval, butand Ball.4 Rock on,
Russell. Julie is worried.

'Won't it take David's mind off Hamlet, and ruin the production?' Me:

'Shut
up. It'd be brilliant.' Seriously, though, he's carrying that whole three-and-a-half-

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2008 19:47:51 GMT

hour
text in his head. We don't want to ruin that night's production. (I'll pay refunds.)

RE: THE
TIMES We'd have

to take the NTA people into our confidence, but maybe not fully, because

Julie is back from LA! She landed five hours ago. The work rate has doubled
already. they love a live link anyway.

She went looking at properties and things out there. She treated that holiday
like a

proper recce for when we
move.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2008 09:41:36 GMT

In other news, the National Television Awards plan is ruined. David is on stage
that **RE: RADIO TIMES**

night. D'oh! It took Julie to point out The Bleedin' Obvious. The NTAs are on
29 Do you listen to Chris Moyles? He's on the TARDIS set tomorrow, but
no one has

October, when David is on stage, in Hamlet, in Stratford-upon-Avon. We all
assumed booked any stars to appear with him! John Barrowman is off
filming. Catherine is

that the NTAs were on a Sunday, like the BAFTAs. Oh, we're idiots. I'm gutted. I was on holiday. Billie is pregnant. David is in panto. (Er, Hamlet.) Moylesey has been

so looking forward to it. Heaven knows how we're going to announce David's leaving making huge capital out of this all week. 'No one's there!' Except bloody me. Oh, I'm

now. I can't imagine anything else as public as the NTAs. Bollocks! That was going to shamed. I JUST REALISED, IT'S PUBLICATION DAY!!! WE'RE AUTHORS!!!

be so much fun.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2008 15:07:34 GMT 5 The
Radio Times article promoting Series Two of The Sarah Jane Adventures mentions Sarah Jane's parents, Barbara and

Eddie,
who died in 1951: 'Russell T Davies chose the name Barbara because it was his late mother's name.' In 2.9/2.10, Sarah

RADIO

TIMES

in time to see them.

Jane goes back

Benjamino! Thank you for that Sarah Jane article in the new Radio Times. You probably

4 Cannon and Ball are a comedy double act consisting of Tommy Cannon and Bobby Ball.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SEVENTEEN: BEST-LAID PLANS

THE REGENERATION

I think we both agree. Partly because it feels like tradition, but also because I've

sort of
precluded ending on a regeneration cliffhanger with The Stolen Earth, because This e-mail
exchange between Steven Moffat and Russell considers the

a lot
of people would feel like they've seen it before. If we show Doctor Eleven, lots Tenth
Doctor's regeneration,,.

of
kids will feel that natural dismay, they'll go 'I don't like him!' as soon as they see FROM:
STEVEN MOFFAT TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 1 OCTOBER
2008 18:14:46 GMT him, but in a way I loved feeling like that as a kid. It's

part of the process. And it

neverHELLO stopped

me watching. Because then you watch his first full episode, and fall in love Can we make sure
David is wearing his tie when he regenerates? It's for a new bit in with him. You're
right, seeing the new guy reminds you that Life Goes On, instead of Episode 1. You're going to
tell me he defeats the baddies by blowing up Oh, It's Finished.his tie

or Hooray. We
agree. We are good bosses. And I think it would be really, really funny
to something...? slip

into the end credits, 'Last line by Steven Moffat.' Seriously. What a handover!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, WEDNESDAY 1
OCTOBER 2008 23:55:38
GMT Reproduced
with kind permissionRE: HELLO

Yes, he will be all tied up. (You know what I mean.) Do you want to see the
new

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES,
THURSDAY 25 SEPTEMBER 2008 10:50:20 GMT

Doctor at the end of David's last episode? We've talked about this, but I have a
head RE: RADIO TIMES like a sieve. It'll end with INT. TARDIS, blaze of light, all the

usual shenanigans... and This morning, Chris Moyles spent five minutes on the phone to
Billie, live on air, then the New Man appears? Feels nice and traditional. But maybe you want
to see him asking her what you're like. 'He's enormous.' 'What, he's fat?' 'No, he's just
enormous. for the first time when he arrives in Series Five, Episode 1. Your call,

boss! And he wears glasses.' 'Has he got a beard?' 'No, why?' 'I imagine he looks like a junior

Santa.'

'No, he's nice.' 'Yeah, but I've got him for three-and-a-half hours!' You'll beFROM: STEVEN MOFFAT TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 2 OCTOBER 2008 08:29:19 GMT

fine.RE:

HELLO

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2008 23:35:39 GMTIt's definitely BOTH our calls. My thinking at the moment: if we get it right, and we

will, we'll have built up this regeneration to a national event. If we DON'T see the RE: RADIO TIMESnew Doctor, it'll be a big fat let-down. If I were eight, I'd be spitting. Furious! It's so Well, Chris Moyles was a hoot. He really is extraordinarily lovely. You realise, like an*Doctor Who* to flip it all with a big 'But never mind, eh?' *Same with the runaway bride* idiot, how much of that radio persona is a performance. He hugs you! Big, proper, warmand the Titanic, in fact. Conscious echo? hugs! He looks you right in the eye when he interviews you, like he's encouraging you.

Clincher: it's the only time well see the Eleventh Doctor (!!) in the old (!!) control And he introduced me to his brother, who's a breathless, over-excited fanboy. Greatroom. And that's not just the fanboy completism that drives me every waking and team. All of them, genuinely excited to be there. Then a big hug goodbye. Completelysleeping moment of my life: it somehow matters. Everything is about saying it's the the opposite of what I was expecting. I had a brilliant time. Ah, showbiz.same man. I mean, it's tempting, holding him back, because it's a good entrance in Lunch with Julie today was surreal. (Pizza Express, Salad Nicoise, thank you.) SheEpisode 1 -- but you get that anyway. got out a map of LA. 'Now, I think you should live near me. These are the areas I

But what do you think? To hell with whose call it is. Nothing is more important recommend. Venice Beach is good. It's all cleaned up, but still bohemian. Lots ofthan getting this right. Except the other 900 things that nодиing is more important writers live there. Views of the sea. You might like it, because the temperature is lower

than

in town. Or there's Larchmont. More suburban, but close to BBC Worldwide.than.

Or

there's Sunset Strip. You like Sunset Strip, remember?' And there are these photos

of

incredible houses, just stunning. Blimey! I can't live somewhere like that. That's

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, THURSDAY 2

OCTOBER 2008 10:21:05 GMT

ridiculous.

I can't believe that this is really happening. So, I stopped thinking about it.

RE: HELLO

We

talked about Phil Ford's robot instead.

»it's a good entrance in Episode 1«

Hey, I'll be the judge of that! Me and my fanboy mates. I will be posting on the
Then, tonight, we went for dinner with John Simm at the St David's (well, I say

dinner

-- bar food, peanuts and crisps). What a hoot! God, he can tell an anecdote. I've
message boards.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
SEVENTEEN: BEST-LAID PLANS

thought of him as the Master for so long, I'd forgotten what brilliant company he is. get each year. For once, Doctor Who could bookend EastEnders! (And it'd mean that weAnd he's the most incredible mimic. I never knew that. He was telling us stories that wouldn't have to wait so long for Christmas on Mars. Easter to Christmas is one hell ofhad pitch-perfect impersonations. (Amazing stories. I'll have to tell you one day.) He a stretch. Easter to November less so.)loved the Master-as-a-skeleton stuff. Loved the eyes. Also, he was raving about The Plus, it was meant to be, because David's first episode was The Christmas Invasion,*Dark Knight, and he wants a bit of the Joker's insanity in the Master this time - which* broadcast on Christmas Day 2005. That's poetic, that is! He was born and died onis fine, that's where I was heading. I wanted to make him madder. Brilliant! Christmas Day. Like Jesus. If Jesus had died on Christmas Day. Oh, go on!

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2008 20:07:33 GMT
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER 2008 02:20:18 GMT

RE: RADIO
TIMES RE:
RADIO TIMESI got a text off Gareth David Lloyd last night: "Thanks for your comments in the book. Dare I say it, that's not as barmy an idea as you might think. A double-bill of ChristmasI'm flattered!" How embarrassing. All I do is say how sexy he is. Day Specials? That's almost irresistible. I wonder...

I went into town today to buy a copy, since I've given all mine away. I like to have one at my side. I wandered into Borders, and practically bumped into a pillar of them! Yes,
a FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER 2008 02:25:22 GMT

pillar. It was horrifying. I just thought, oh, please don't let this pillar still be untouched by RE: RADIO TIMES2012. There were big signs announcing our October book signing. 'RUSSELL T DAVIES Claim it as your idea! Yeah, then it might happen!& BENJAMIN COOK SIGNING'. Or maybe it said 'SINGING'. We could do that.

Anyway, I bought one, came home, read all the Gareth David Lloyd references, and FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER 20 08 02:27:11 GMT
blushed to my boots. It's complicated, having a book out. RE: RADIO TIMES

I'm
e-mailing Julie now. I won't mention you yet. But the idea will always be yours.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 3 OCTOBER 20 08 22:02:08 GMT The Great Correspondence cannot lie.RE: RADIO TIMES

This bloody OBE. You're allowed to bring three people. I've got 1) my boyfriend,
2) FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2008 00:37:31 GMT

my sister, 3) my other sister, and 4) my father. Now, my father had said that he didn't
RE: RADIO TIMES want to come, because he's blind, but last night I made the mistake of saying, out of I'm just back from Cardiff's Gay Film Awards, where I presented Best Short Film. 6 duty, 'Are you sure?' Blow me, he changed his mind! So, who out of the other three Actually, I was dreading it. I thought, I'm bound to end up bored and slinking homed to I get rid of? Everyone is digging their heels in. No one is volunteering to take the at midnight to catch up on The X Factor' But do you know what? It was brilliant! I bullet. Bloody hell. was honoured to be there, I really was. There were filmmakers there from across the

world,
and it was all Queer as Folk this, Queer as Folk that, Torchwood, gay, bisexual, FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SATURDAY 4 OCTOBER 2008 01:47:23 GMT blah, blah, blah, and an award-winner made an acceptance speech saying, "Thank you **RE: RADIO TIMES** to Russell T Davies, because he was my inspiration.' That made me feel as old as the We're in the middle of a credit crunch, with unemployment everywhere, and mounting hills, though. I'm like the gay Santa. debt, and your biggest problem is 'Who do I take to Buckingham Palace?!! There were no taxis to be had on a Saturday night, so I've walked all the way home

Listen, something struck me today, as I was flicking through The Writer's Tale for the from town in the pissing rain. But here's an e-mail from Caitlin Moran: 53rd time. I was reading our exchange of texts last Christmas Day, and thinking... *I'm reading your book. Aside from fainting with joy at ME-ME-ME-ME-ME being David's swansong is a two-parter, yes? So, when is it actually scheduled for? You've mentioned, my main reaction is: I never realised how mental you are. You missed your* been saying some time in early 2010, possibly... but why not show both parts on *calling. You could have been the greatest actor the world has ever known. Your public* Christmas Day? The Mars Special could be on Halloween instead (you'd have to take *carapace is mighty and convincing. You always come across so... Asian.* 7 *With a fag*, out the Christmassy bits), or in November, or the week before Christmas - anywhere

but Christmas Day itself- then David's final adventure, both parts, could give us the 6 The Iris Prize Festival, in Cardiff, celebrates gay and lesbian films from around the world.

7
Asian the 'Great Lion', the guardian and saviour of the magical kingdom of Narnia, is the central character in the Chronicles Best Christmas Day Ever! Like the two Christmas Day episodes of EastEnders that we of Nornia novels by CS Lewis.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
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It's odd to think that she even had a notion of me that needed reassessing in the first *as Folk when he was 13, and he watched Stuart and Nathan having sex, and then, more* place. But that's good, I think. Feels healthy. significantly, watched them rush off to the hospital, and that complicated scene between

Stuart and Vince on the roof, where they hug - and he said that suddenly so many thingsFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2008 00:53:42 GMT made sense to him. He went into school the next day, and told all his mates - all girlsRE: RADIO TIMES - that he was gay, and they were all happy for him, and he was fine. Now, I'm sure thatDoes that Queer as Folk association ever get tiresome? Don't you wish that people it was a bit more complicated than that, and the story was narrowed down to be said towouldn't bang on about it? You've said, when it comes to All Things Gay, it's important my face, but that's probably the hundredth time I've been told something like that, andto stress visibility, and your Gay Writing has been the making of you, but don't you I will never, ever get tired of it.wish that you were recognised for Writing, for Drama, for Storytelling or whatever, irrespective of the Gay tag? Is it even constructive to label Queer as Folk as Gay Drama? FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2008 17:48:39 GMT

Most of the people who watched Queer as Folk were straight. Well, statistically. (Unless RE: RADIO TIMESCharlie Hunnam's Arse turned them all.) There was me, blathering on about the gays, and I forgot to tell you... Julie LIKES

your Christmas plan! 'Fascinating,' she said. None of us had ever thought of it! I cameFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2008 17:04:36 GMT clean to her in a phone call last night, and admitted that it was your idea - which sheRE: RADIO TIMES loved, because she thought it was brilliant to get an outsider's opinion on the wholeI know what you mean, but it doesn't bother me at all, the gay thing. A lot of writers thing. (An outsider? I think you're secretly running the whole shebang!) She's run itwould die for a label! I'm proud of it, I really am, which is lucky, because I reckon it's past Jane, and there's definite interest. Apparently, one of the most attractive thingsgoing to stick. The whole Doctor Who thing might die down after a while, especially about your idea is hitting the Saturday before Christmas with the Mars episode. JulieSteven takes over, and then someone after him, and someone after them, and I suspect said, 'It makes it a completely Doctor Who Christmas!' She said that we might have to'll be left with the epitaph of Queer as Folk. The thing is, I think I am a Gay Writer, run the first part of the finale on Christmas Day at 6pm, to make room for EastEnderswhen I write anything. If I wrote a drama exclusively about a man and a woman and stuff, and do I have a problem with that? But I think it's fine.who've been married for 40 years, I still think I'd be

writing a gay version of that - or She's only had a quick conversation with Jane, so they're going to talk about it morerather my insights, as a gay man, into that relationship. next week. Long way to go. And there are problems. If the Mars episode goes out the

I'm slightly in PR mode here, because I had to do 27 quick interviews after the Saturday before Christmas, then does that hit the X Factor final? (Is the last X FactorGay Film Awards. You have to be automatically positive - in the context of a gay film the Saturday before the last Saturday so that they can get the Christmas Number Onefestival, you must be - but I don't have to fake that response. I really, really mean it. slot?) But there you go. The wheels are turning. You have turned them. Do you fancy

Most crucially, I don't think it's ever affected my commissions. I'm not aware of anyone running the LA office?

ever having said, 'He can't write that because he's gay.' Well, it might have been thought, subtly and insidiously. When people write off my scripts as 'lightweight', I think that's FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2008 18:18:26 GMT

bound up with their perception of my sexuality, even if they aren't conscious of that. **RE: RADIO TIMES**

But there's always someone who's going to say they don't like my writing because of Last year's XFactor final was the weekend before the weekend before Christmas. Ditto

this, that or the other. Equally, they might say, 'Gay or straight, I think you're rubbish.' the year before. This year's will probably be 13 December, but it's hard to call whether

Fair enough. I think they're rubbish, too! Then again, the man who commissioned Bob the 2009 final will be on the 12th or 19th. I predict 12 December, to give them time

& Rose and The Second Coming for ITV was Nick Elliott: older, straight, millionaire, to get a Christmas Number One.

all whisky and horseracing. But he loved me, frankly. He loved my work. The trendy, »Do you fancy running the LA office?«

iconoclastic Channel 4 turned down The Second Coming, but the populist ITV gent I am already. Who do you think rigs every Oscars night?

understood it. Who'd have thought? In the end, you can't worry. That's the truth. I have never, ever worried about it. It's only when asked about it that I have to consider it. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2008 19:28:39 GMT

Maybe I'm blind to a lot of what goes on, and is said, around me. But isn't that **RE: RADIO TIMES**

always the case?! Tonight, one young filmmaker told me that he'd been watching

Queer
down the

I'm studying this year's X Factor*. It looks to me like they'll have whittled

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contestants to three by 13 December this year, because there's always three in the final.
This means that we have a chance! The Saturday before Christmas is Factor-less! I can't

ON TOUR!

believe I've just sat here with a calendar working that
out. From Wednesday 8 to Friday 10 October 2008, Russell and Benjamin
embarked
on a series of signings in bookstores around the UK. Originally

I have just typed out the Christmas 2009 calendar, complete with the XFactor dates,

published
In Doctor Who Magazine 402, this is Russell's account of theirand sent it to Julie! I'm
obsessed. three days on tour...

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 6 OCTOBER 2008 15:34:17 GMT I'm
on tour! Yes, it's me and Benjamin Cook from this very magazine, going roundRE: RADIO
TIMES bookshops,

signing The Writer's Tale, (Later, we're told that a blogger says we look likeJulie has spoken to David about the
NTAs. He's up for the live feed! It's tricky now, Bannakaffalatta and a Slitheen. Worse than that,
it's Margaret Slitheen! Hmph.) Davidbecause we'll have to start talking to the NTA people without
making it obvious what's Tennant sends a text: 'Have you got a tour bus?' Um. No. We've got a car. But
it's a verygoing on. Then again, they must be thinking that David stands a good chance
of nice car, driven by the man who drives Alan Titchmarsh, so there. We're on a three-day,winning,
so they'd want a live backstage camera just in case, surely? (At the same whistle-stop
tour -- London, Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Cardiff. That's funny,' Itime, male and female actors are put
into the same category this year, so Catherine is say, 'every time we stay overnight, it's in a city
where I've got a home.' 'Yes,' says Ed the

against David. That could split the vote. Christ, we've never needed David to
win Book Man wearily. 'You'd almost think it was planned.' Oh, right, sorry, thanks.SO much! Poor
Catherine. I wanted her to stand up there with a trophy for Donna We've got no
idea what to expect. Ten people, 35 maybe? What if no one turns up? I

The only option is to start talking to the NTA people now. I even think, a few once saw
Richard and Judy sitting in a shop with nobody. I ended up buying their bookdays beforehand or maybe on the
day, we should let them know the big picture about out of sympathy. But when we arrive
in the first store, we're told the queue is snakingDavid's announcement, because that's only fair. Live TV is
a nightmare, and they out of the door! It turns out, that's for Julie Walters, but never mind. I
declare her ourwouldn't thank us for giving them a big shock. They need to be able to handle
it. mortal enemy. In London, the staff say, 'You've got more than Jamie Oliver and Alan

I was on set for Torchwood this afternoon, in Cardiff Bay. It's so happy! It's a joy to be Carr,' and I'm happy for the rest of my life. And when the Manchester shop says, 'You've there. They're buzzing. That's because of Euros, and Pete, and the fact that Doctor Who beaten Sir Bobby Charlton,' I decide to run for President. isn't filming, so they're the Number One Show. Psychologically, I think that's having a It's a bit like being a gangster. The car pulls up in a deserted loading bay; big burly men huge impact. And I really do think it's found a good, new shape. This five-hour thriller march you through concrete corridors; you're taken to meet the boss in a subterranean feels great. I'm absolutely sure it works. (That'll come back to haunt me.) I'm glad office. Then she offers you apricot cake, and the analogy fails apart. But we're actually they're happy. They deserve it. nervous and jittery, me clutching a Sharpie, Ben mainlining Red Bull, until we're led

through to the table, and then, all of a sudden - it's brilliant! Absolutely brilliant. We FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 7 OCTOBER 2008 22:19:34 GMT

end up having the time of our lives. Thing is, it's so smiley. Everyone's smiling! That's RE: **RADIO TIMES** the wonderful thing about Doctor Who, in the end: it just makes you smile. A hovering I had a script meeting in London today, with Gareth. Beforehand, Jane grabbed Julie journalist asks snideily, 'Are you sick of pretending to smile?' Hey, back off, hack! The and me. Into the secret glass office. Not laughing so much today; serious face on. The smile's genuine. How could it not be? NTA Plan is accelerating. But we need to take a second and concentrate. Should we People have been queuing for ages, so Ben and I are genuinely frantic to make it do this? Is it wise? Jane has had to let the Heads of Publicity know, and it sounds as worth their while. If you've never been to a signing, this is what happens: you're given although they're worried. They think it'll be hard to control. (It's better than the control Post-It in the queue, to stick on the flyleaf and write down the dedication you want, and we usually have!) They think the press will be furious, for giving them no warning. more importantly how to spell the name, otherwise it would take forever. Especially that (Isn't that what happens with news?!) And I think, quietly, they're worried that it's woman called Anniina ('It's from Finland'). Then it becomes a blur of names and smiles. On ITV, not the BBC. (I love that! Doctor Who all over the rival channel, upstaging Hello Angela, Michael, Freya, Jason, Rosalind, Minea, Team Lesbian, a man called Jesus everyone!) I suspect that Jane was only scratching the surface, that there's a lot of (Ben writes 'God bless'), women dressed as Captain Jack, teddies dressed as Captain opposition to this idea, but she keeps loving it, saying things like 'coup de theatre' . Jack, and, best of all, the kids. Little, round, giggling faces. I ask, 'What's your favourite

Talking of which, we're off on our book-signing tour tomorrow! How mad. See you 1 Ed Griffiths is Publicity Manager at Ebury Publishing. in the morning, Benjamin. Bright and early. 2 Richard Macielej and Judy Finnigan are husband-and-wife TV presenters.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
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FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 11 OCTOBER 2008
01:25:33 GMTepisode?' A lad called Alyn says Rose, which I've never heard anyone
say before. He'll

RE:
RADIO TIMESbe the producer in 2028. But two little boys just stare solemnly.
'Favourite episode?'

Benjamino!
Hope you survived the Dalek-strewn streets of Cardiff after our signing.Silence, stare.
'Favourite companion?' Silence, stare. 'Favourite monster?' Silence,

My
night turned to crap. I was just about to get an early night, when I got calledstare. 'I think
you two are secret Primeval fans.' 'Oooh yeah!' they chime, huge grins.

out
to the Torchwood set in Pontcanna. A huge location has just fallen through -- theMum says
sorry and takes them home to be beaten soundly.

Then it's back to the autographs - and a signature under pressure becomes

entire
climax to Episode 5 was written around it -- because there's asbestos in the roof.something
very odd indeed, i find myself writing Result Davies. Peanut Davies.
Runt So, more rewrites. The rewrite pages will soon start hitting mysterious
colours likeDavros. One of them even looks like Pam Dance. Ben's is morphing into
some weird goldenrod. You know you're in trouble when you've hit
goldenrod.alien pictogram
[...]
And now I am
engaged in a complex and ridiculous discussion with the Doctor

Our favourite story comes from Birmingham. The woman in charge,
Amanda *Who Sound Department (they never sleep) about*
what a Cybershade sounds like. For- who should be in charge of the whole
country, frankly - says that the manager of Christ's sake, I don't know!
Maybe sort of... raaawr.the Nationwide next door has asked for the queue to be
removed. Why? 'It looks like What a week though. Just brilliant. I'm glad we
didn't fall out and storm off, likethere's a run on the bank!' So if the worldwide
financial markets have since collapsed, bands do on tour.and you're reading
this in the firelight of your own furniture while fighting off wild dogs,

now you know why. Doctor Who brought down civilisation. But what a way to
go.
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 13
OCTOBER 2008 00:59:46 GMT

And as the queues go on and on - the girls who bring birthday cake, little Emily who **CHELTENHAM** can't stop laughing, Karen and her husband {'We got engaged at a convention, and I have come back from the Cheltenham Literary Festival itching. Bites, Ben. Insectour dog's named after Katy Manning'), The Angels Have The Phone Box t-shirts, the bites. Some sod has had their photo taken with me, and given me BLOODY FLEAS!!!

3

sheer goodwill of it all -- I can't help thinking, this is fandom. At its best. Cos I live in Otherwise, I had a really good time. We missed you, though. Especially as I walked a very closed Doctor Who world, and the subject of fandom is usually brought up by

into the signing room, and everyone does that clapping thing, and I had to sit down provocative, negative journalists so that I often react in a provocative, negative way. As

and sort out my Sharpies with them all staring at me. That felt weird on my own. though the fans are a problem. But that's just restricting the discussion to the extremes,

Caitlin Moran interviewed me on stage. She sends her love. She completely hadn't the couple of hundred angry, shrill voices who dominate the conversation. Now, these

thought about kids being in the audience. I saw one of the questions on her pad: 'You three days open my eyes. I'm an idiot! Because I can see so clearly, right in front of me,

say writing is sexual. What does that mean?' I said, 'How am I going to describe that that the majority of fans are happy and fun and barmy, just like the show. And the most

with kids sitting there?' 'Kids?' she said. 'KIDS?! All of my questions are about sex! joyous thing of all is that every one of us -- those in the queue, and us two signing away

- have got a little blue box spinning somewhere in our heads. Spinning forever.

There are kids?!' She dived into the dressing room for 20 minutes to rewrite everything.

Then it's back to the Post-its and the faces, hello Aaron, Giovanni, handsome Stefan, Then, we got shown into the auditorium for a sound test. It was huge. Like 2,500 seats!

Matt from Aardman, Mikee with two Es, Susan, Nige, Ben, meet Ben!, Erica, Harriet, We both stood there staring, and suddenly it wasn't funny any more. I haven't been that

Paula, Connor, Hayz, Ramsey, Owen, Joshua, Jonathan, Johnny, John, Jon, Jo... nervous in ages. I went outside, and smoked for half an hour. As it began, we had to

backstage and wait behind a curtain to be introduced. The noise of 2,000+ people! walk
MEANWHILE: Terrifyin
(I should have known this was going to happen, really, but I never pay anyFar away from
the scribbles and name-dropping, in a cold and forgotten corner
of attention to the schedule.) But then on we went, and everyone was
clapping, and
ofCardiff... course
it was lovely. Again, all that goodwill. Doctor bloody Who.

A small red light blinks in the dark. Printers sit poised. Computers count away
the It was only 15 minutes of me on my own, then Johnny B came bounding on,
andseconds in a dusty, abandoned room. A sign on the door bears the legend:
Doctor Who then it really was a hoot. OMG! LOL! I luv him! SQUEEEE! He's so
relaxed, andProduction
Office. slides from
anecdote to anecdote - and then ever-so-serious, heartfelt speeches - with

Soon, so soon, the waiting will be over. And preproduction on the Specials
will so much ease. He's the gay buccaneer one minute, the children's hero the
next,
andbegin. everyone
just worshipped him. Three women in the front row were literally OMG-ing

Monday 24
November. in their no-
doubt- Torchwood-branded pants. Then it was the Q&A, and lots of kids

Tick lock, tick
lock... asked questions,
which is guaranteed to make everyone smile. Someone asked what

3 The Angels have the phone box' Is a much-quoted line from Doctor Who
3.10. our favourite episode is. I gave the stock answer -- 'It's like asking you
to choose your

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favourite child' - and Caitlin said, 'Oh, I can do that!' He he. And then there was more bristling with anticipation. In fact, I think Bjorn and Benny should write Torchwoodclapping, and it was over. Phew. Series Four...

But nothing is without an agenda. Nothing, not ever. The man who always drives (To the tune of ABBA's 'Voulez-Vous')Anthony Hopkins when he's in Wales drove my car on the way to Cheltenham. I said

casually -- okay, not so casually - that I'd love the great man to be in Doctor Who. Til *Weevils everywhere*I have a word,' he said. Seriously, he's got to e-mail Sir Hopkins tomorrow, and said he'd *A pterodactyl flying through the air*10mention

it! *Eve is at the bar*

*You cum so hard, you don't know where you are*FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 13 OCTOBER 2008 04:03:53 GMT *And here we go again, we know the start, we know the end*RE: *John* CHELTENHAM

*is in this scene*Julie sent an e-mail at 2am saying, "The papers are reporting that you called Prince *Been on TV before, now it's the law, to see some more*Charles "a miserable swine" at Cheltenham.' Did I?! On stage, we talked about him *Of John on our TV screens*not appearing in Voyage of the Damned, so I must have said it then. Can't remember.

*Torchwood Four (ah-ha) Take it*FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 13 OCTOBER 2008 04:28:40

GMT *now or leave it Now is all we get*RE: *(ah-ha) Nothing promised, no*That'll make 28 November interesting. Isn't that the day you collect your OBE from *regrets...*his mother?

Etc.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2008 16:30:12 GMT

RE: CHELTENHAM FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2008 16:57:08 GMT

Half an hour ago, I received an e-mail from Julie: 'We are a GO for backstage filming RE: CHELTENHAMin the Hamlet interval.' The NTA Plan is on! For God's sake, go and vote, Ben! Vote That is so brilliant! Look, this could be the end-of-Act-One ballad.David! Vote now! I've done it already. Felt weird and wrong, skipping over

Catherine's (To the tune of ABBA's 'Fernando')name. It's for the greater good of Doctor Who, but all the same...

Meanwhile, here's something to make you hoot. This afternoon, Julie and I received *Did you cum so hard, Fernando?*an e-mail from Mark Cossey, a producer at the BBC. Lovely man, great supporter of *I remember long ago another Torchwood Hub like this...*ours, he oversees Doctor Who Confidential. Apparently, an entertainment company,

with considerable experience in these things, has approached Mark to ask us what we Fernando is a Tiny Space Monkey who's fallen through the Rift and is trying to takethink of Torchwood: The Musical as a concept! 'They have the two chaps from ABBA over the world with his Evil Pop Music. It'd pass the time.on board to write the music,' Mark explained. 'I wasn't quite sure what to say, but I did

promise to pass it on.' Of course, after I'd finished laughing, I e-mailed straight back: FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2008 17:14:27 GMT'But, what, do you mean Bjorn and Benny?8 Really?!' Mark e-mailed back: 'Yep. Bjorn **RE: CHELTENHAM**and Benny love Torchwood. Maybe you have the power to re-form ABBA.' Oh, that's Forgot to say, the NTA news is ridiculously exciting. Imagine being in the audiencefunny. That is the best thing ever! for that! How nervous will you all be? IT'S LIVE! ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN!

What a plan! I love it so much.FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2008 16:43:37 GMT

Look, while I'm e-mailing you about the NTAs, ABBA, and other acronyms, we've**RE: CHELTENHAM** received an e-mail from Ebury: 'Excellent news! Richard and Judy have selected TheHA, HA, HA, HA, HA, IT'D BE AMAZING! LITERALLY, AMAZING! I'm

9 The sewer-dwelling Weevils are the 'resident alien' of Torchwood Series One and Two.8 Bjorn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson from 1970s/80s Swedish pop group ABBA, 10 The Torchwood team keeps a pterodactyl as a pet. The creature came through the space-time Rift.

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Writer's Tale for their Christmas Books strand. It will be endorsed by R&J on their for a year, because the money isn't available yet. It would then play at 5.30pm on a new TV programme as a perfect Christmas gift.' Bollocks, just as they sink to 50,000 Sunday, with repeats on CBBC later that week. (There's a lot of speculation there.viewers. But we're in the R&J Book Club! CBBC might not like that. The money and the slot can't be definite yet. Plus, Jane

is leaving.) But what would we prefer? To carry on with Series Three now, or risk theFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 14 OCTOBER 2008 17:20:18 GMT hiatus? Christ. I don't know.RE:

CHELTENHAM I know a 5.30pm slot sounds wonderful, but I was in the Sarah Jane Dub todayBLIMEY! FANTASTIC NEWS! - a beautiful, tender story written by Joe Lidster - and here's the thing: it's just not a

Let's say no. Oh, all right then, 5.30pm-on-Sunday show. If I were inventing a Sunday Doctor Who spin-off, it would be yes. be very different. We've got these kids running around, and a supercomputer built into

the wall, and lots of daylight, because kids can't work nights, and a lovely ethos thatFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2008 23:30:27 GMT smacks of weekday teatime telly. (Which, yes, okay, kids aren't watching. Shaddup!)RE:

CHELTENHAM We'd have to reinvent it. Should we? Should we reinvent a spin-off? How far fromAnne Jowett from Radio Times e-mailed me today: its origin is it

sliding then? I sat watching it today with 5.30pm-on-Sunday in mind,*Christmas-wise, it looks as though we'll run the Doctor Who cover the week before the* aware of the changes that we can make, and it felt wrong. Yet, if the extra money keeps*Christmas issue - at the moment, there are compelling reasons why we can't run it two* it looking handsome and stylish... oh, I'm really stumped. So is Julie.*weeks before - but the good news is that although I can't promise absolutely, we're gunning*

very hard for Christmas 2009. I forwarded that straight to Julie, adding: FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2008 01:44:18 GMT

PROOF!!! I'm telling you, it's meant to be. The Doctor Who Christmas! Julie RE: CHELTENHAMe-mailed back saying, 'I am on it. I promise.' So, that's

exciting. Your plan!
important is a Radio Times

Thanks for the update on, well, everything. Can I ask, how

When things are set in motion with Julie, they often fall off my radar for a while, cover? Is it more about publicity or prestige? Oh, but poor The Sarah Jane because she has meetings with... well, I don't know who she has meetings with, but *Adventured That's a tough call. I'd say continue for ashe* talks to Jane, and schedulers, and all sorts of bosses that I don't even know exist, year with a lower budget, and then switch to Sundays for Series Four. Sorted. and e-mails fly around that would make The Writer's Tale look like a pamphlet. I think »We've worked out how to cheapen the show, but it's worrying us.« What I show off sometimes, and make myself sound like I'm on top of these things - I have you worked out? How can you cheapen The Sarah Jane Adventures? can catch the odd draught of me doing that in the book - whereas in fact Julie adds

it to her mountain of work, and I sit back. Then, with e-mails like that one from
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2008 02:37:54 GMT

Anne, I don't imagine that Julie has forgotten about Christmas, but I become a nag. **RE: CHELTENHAM** Essentially, it's me saying, 'I WANT!' I'd deplore it, but it works. I dump the workload A Radio Times cover is important. It's one of those things that fans consider to be and responsibility on Julie, and flounce off. She is so marvellous. important, but do then turn out to have real value. Not in terms of ratings, really, but

In other news... poor Sarah Jane is suffering. Down from one million viewers last in terms of prestige. It's symbolic, really. It sends out a signal to other press outlets. series to half a million this week, presumably because the programme is now shown It gives you stature, and helps to drive the whole campaign. A Christmas cover is half an hour earlier this year. That's got to be playing a part. Just when Series Three is gobsmacking. That 2005 one, with the TARDIS in the snow, was amazing to all of us. looking at big budget cuts - at least one-fifth off the budget. We've worked out how to Daft, really, isn't it? Sounds silly when you describe it like this. But it's real. You go into make the show for less, but it's worrying us. I'd hate that wonderful cast to be unhappy a Publicity meeting and say, 'We've got the RT cover for this episode,' and everyone with what we're doing. So, an interesting choice cropped up today -- and I don't know sits up, so we do work hard on them. In fairness, the RT loves Doctor Who, and really what to think, which is unusual for me. Jane Tranter didn't know about the budget supports us. (You might have noticed!) I can remember the days when I'd long for ancuts, because it's a Children's Department commission (only the pilot was part-funded *RT cover. Casanova was the first one that I ever had. I was so excited. They brought it* by Drama), but when she found out, she was instantly brilliant. She offered to bump to the press launch. I got such a kick. Not just me - Nicola, Julie, everyone. And there's up more or less to our original budget... but the show would have to go on hiatus on the cover was David Tennant! Nothing has changed.

»What
have you worked out? How can you cheapen The Sarah Jane Adventures'.«

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

We'd have to strip it back, and be lethal with the schedule. At the moment, each episode has six days filming. We'd have to make that five, but a strict five. It would allow five locations (or less, preferably) per episode, but you couldn't move location within any one day, because you'd need to complete up to eight pages a day. It all depends on the writer, to script a full and strict day's work per location. No half days. We could go further. We're debating whether to break the director's ownership of the material. I started that conversation, and it's kind of a runaway train. If, say, Episodes 3, 4, 7, 9 and 11 have scenes outside Sarah Jane's house, at the moment we'd go to the house exterior once for Episodes 3 and 4, then again, weeks later (and probably with a different director), for Episode 7, then again for Episode 9, then a fourth trip to complete Episode 11. That's a normal TV schedule. Under the new system, you'd film all those scenes outside the house in one day, across all the episodes, with one director (this means getting all your scripts in, in advance), so directors wouldn't own episodes as such; they'd own locations. On the downside, it could increase cast costs (you'd have to have cast Episode 11 while you're shooting Episode 3, which might mean paying an actor for a longer stretch), but also might affect the calibre of director that you can appoint. A lot of directors would refuse to work that way.

Director-ownership is one of the most expensive parts of drama budgets. They're paid for weeks of prep, weeks of filming, weeks of post-production. If we cut back the prep, make them shoot whatever is convenient to us, then shift them on to shoot new material, which removes them from post-production and leaves the Edit in the hands of the editors... it's actually closer to the American system, where directors get two or three days in post-production to give notes, then they're off, and the producers run the Edit. It's a bit radical. It's horrific for the director. All over the industry, the director is becoming the fall guy for these budget deficits. That's a real tragedy. It would affect our schedules as producers, too. More work for us. Great.

But I'm not sure the changes on Sarah Jane will be that big. I'm not sure they need to be, not yet, because we can make additional savings with the FX, and the grade, and the size of the guest cast. But it's good to have discussions like this, to open everything up to examination. That's what the job is going to become, more and more -- cost-cutting. It's a good skill to have. Part of me actually enjoys flexing those muscles, if I'm honest -- and I'm an amateur next to people like Julie. One day, they'll have honed an entire shoot down to a Polaroid and a passing dog. Though maybe we could cut the dog...?

Hey, the Torchwood team finished filming on the Hub tonight. The end! The very last scene before the place blows up. They had cakes and champagne. Even if there's a fourth series, I wouldn't bring back the Hub. We're done. Move on. I wonder what we'll do with that set. Turn it into matchwood, I suppose.

Right, I'm off. Script meetings at 10am tomorrow. Zzzzz...

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THREE E-MAILS (AND AN EPIPHANY)

In which the Tenth Doctor's final words are revealed,

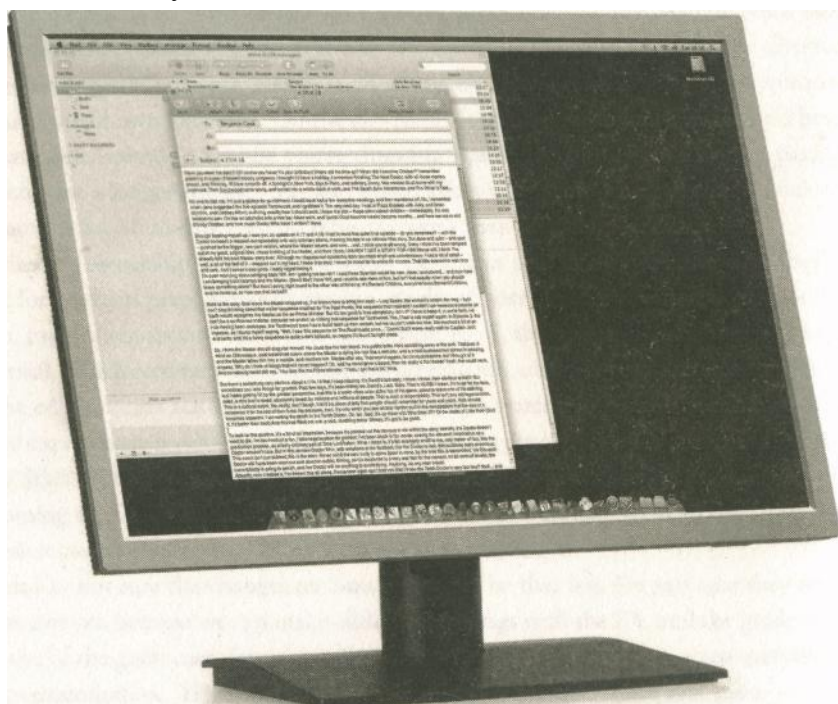
the Master slashes up a businessman in a toilet cubicle,

and thick, putty-coloured gloop drips down soft, sticky faces

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2008 02:57:25 GMT

4.17/4.18

Have you seen the date?! (Of course you have! It's your birthday!) Where did the time



go? When did it become October? I remember

planning this year; it looked bloody

gorgeous. I thought I'd have a holiday. I remember finishing *The Next Doctor*, with

all those months ahead, and thinking, I'll have a month off. A fortnight in New York,

trips to Paris, and ordinary, lovely, free weekends at home with my boyfriend. Then

Torchwood came along, and turned into a whole stack of work, and The Sarah Jane

Adventures, and The Writer's Tale...

No one forced me. I'm just a glutton for punishment. I could have had a few

executive meetings, and then wandered off. No, I remember when Jane suggested the

five-episode *Torchwood*, and I grabbed it. The very next day, I was in Pizza Express with

Julie, and Brian Minchin, and Lindsey Alford, outlining exactly how it should work.

I knew the plot - those alien-voiced children - immediately. No one twisted my arm.

I'm like an alcoholic with a free bar. More work, and I jump! Days become weeks

become months... and here we are in mid bloody October, and how much *Doctor*

Who have I written? None.

Enough beating myself up. I owe you an update on 4.17 and 4.18. I had in mind

that quiet final episode -- do you remember? -- with the *Doctor* on board a clapped-

out-spaceship with very ordinary aliens, meeting his fate in an intimate little story. But

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Jane and Julie - and you! - pushed for the bigger, two-part version, where the Master laugh, it is! It's a piece of telly that people should remember for years and years. Kids returns, and now... well, I think you're all wrong. Sorry. I think I've been tempted out should remember it for the rest of their lives. No pressure, then. It's only when you of my good, original idea. I keep thinking of the Master, and then I think: I HAVEN'T see all this Hamlet stuff in the newspapers that the size of it becomes apparent. I am GOT A STORY FOR HIM! Worse still, I think: I've already told the best Master story writing the death of the Tenth Doctor. Oh. My. God. It's up there with Who Shot JR? 1 ever. Although my clapped-out-spaceship story sounded small and unimpressive, I had Or the death of Little Nell! 2 (Sod it, it's better than that!) And this has filled me with a lot of detail - well, a lot of the feel of it - mapped out in my head. I knew that story. cold, clutching terror. Blimey, it's got to be good. I knew its mood for its entire 60 minutes. That little spaceship was nice and safe. And To look for the positive, it's a bit of an inspiration, because it's pointed out that I swear it was good. I really regret losing it. obvious to me within the story: namely, the Doctor doesn't want to die. I'm too much

I'm even worrying about bringing back Wilf. Am I getting too fan-ish? I said these of a fan, I take regeneration for granted; I've been stuck in fan-mode, seeing the Specials would be new, clean, uncluttered... and now here I am bringing back Cramps eleventh incarnation as a production process, as a fairly ordinary part of Time Lord and the Master. (Good title!) I love Wilf, and I want to see more of him, but isn't that fiction. What I mean is, it's felt strangely small to me, very matter-of-fact, like the exactly when you should leave something alone? But then I swing right round to the Doctor wouldn't care. But in this all-new Doctor Who, with emotions at the forefront, other way of thinking: it's Bernard Cribbins, everyone loves Bernard Cribbins, and he like the Doctor is real, this suddenly feels enormous. This event isn't just subtext; this loves us, so how can that be bad? is the story. Never mind the new body to come (bear in mind, by the time this is

Back to the story. Ever since the Master cropped up, I've known how to bring him transmitted, the Eleventh Doctor will have been seen out and about in public, filming, back - Lucy Saxon, the women's prison, the ring - but I can't stop thinking about that so his existence is a

very real fact for the viewers, on all sorts of levels); the current bodywaiter sequence inspired by The Real Hustle, the sequence that I realised I couldn't use is going to perish, and the Doctor will do anything to avoid dying. Anything. As anybecause everyone on Earth would recognise the Master as the ex-Prime Minister. But man would.it's too good to lose completely, isn't it? I have to keep it, in some form. He can't be a

Actually, now I realise it, I've known this all along. Remember ages ago I told youconfidence trickster, because we ended up nicking that sequence for Torchwood. Yes, I that I knew the Tenth Doctor's very last line? Well... and this is a real birthday present,had to rob myself again. In Episode 3, the Hub having been destroyed, the Torchwood Ben... here's the line. Ready? It's simply:team has to build itself up from scratch, but we couldn't work out how. We reached

DOCTORa bit of an impasse, so I found myself saying, 'Well, I saw this sequence on The Real

Hustle once...' Damn! But it works really well for Captain Jack and lanto, and it's a I don't want to go.funny sequence in quite a dark episode, so maybe it's found its right place.

So, I think the Master should disguise himself. He could dye his hair blond. In Said all alone, standing by himself in theTARDIS, with the old, orange, regeneration

a public toilet. He's scrubbing away at the sink. That puts in mind an Ortonesque, glow beginning to burn. Nice, simple, and sad. 'I don't want to go.' So true of the

post-watershed scene where the Master is dying his hair like a rent boy, and a smart Doctor, and of David, and of all of us watching. 'I don't want to go.' Oh, poor Doctor.

businessman comes in cruising, and the Master takes him into a cubicle, and murders It's like I've known how sad his reaction would be, but I just didn't realise what a strong

him. Maybe after sex. That won't happen, for obvious reasons, but I thought of it story that little sentence contained. Because now, in my head, that story is rocketing!

anyway. Why do I think of things that will never happen? Oh, and he could grow a This is life and death! This feeds back into the Master. The Doctor and the Master are

beard, then he really is the Master! Yeah, that could work. And somebody could still always so opposite, and yet so similar, and now this story is about the Master surviving,

say, 'You look like the Prime Minister.' 'Yeah, I get that a lot.'
Nice. too - doing anything to escape death.

But there's something very obvious about 4.17/4.18 that I keep missing: it's David's You know what? Sod that Real Hustle stuff. What a waste of time. That's way too

last story. I know, I know, how obvious is that?! But sometimes you take things for easy. The Master is dying, and desperate to survive, and so is the Doctor. They're on a

granted. Past few days, it's been hitting me. David's. Last. Story. That is HUGE! I collision course. So, back in that women's prison, in the satanic rite with Lucy Saxon...

mean, it's huge for the fans, but I keep getting hit by the greater perspective, that this oh, she's not dumb, she's been waiting for him. She knew about the ring. She's been

is a world-class actor at the top of his game, about to leave one of his defining roles, a waiting all this time for the cult to gather around her and show its hand. As the vortex

role that is loved, absolutely loved, by millions and millions of people. That is such a

1

'Who Shot JR?' was an advertising slogan created in 1980 to promote Season Four of US soap opera Dallas. In the final

responsibility. This isn't any old regeneration. This is a cultural event. No, really, don't scene of Season Three, the character JR Ewing was shot by an unknown assailant; viewers had to wait eight months to learn

whether

he would survive and which of his many enemies was responsible.

2

'Little' Nell Trent is the heroine of Charles Dickens' novel The Old Curiosity Shop.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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EIGHTEEN: THREE E-MAILS (AND AN EPIPHANY)			

of light appears and the Master is reborn, Lucy has a... I don't know, a weapon (what was a nightmare. Writer after writer would get sacked, and I'd have to replace them. Itsort of weapon can she have hidden in prison?!), and she smashes the ring, just as he's was supposed to be written by a team, but I ended up writing the entire first series, and manifesting, just before he's complete. Explosion! The entire prison destroyed! The most of the second, and every member of the cast needed a story, every week. There Master consumed in fire! What happened? When the Doctor arrives on Earth from was a regular cast of 12 or so, and you had to think of story after story for them. It was the Ood-Sphere, the TARDIS lands outside the smouldering remains of the prison... merciless. It was a story machine. One day, on Series Two, another script had fallen but it's a few days later. The few days later are crucial; a little slip in time that puts through at the last minute, and I had to fill the space in about ten days. I was walking the Master ahead. There are stories that as the prison burned, a strange half-shadow away from Granada in a sweat, because my head was empty. I had no story of the week. creature scuttled out of the flames and ran away... Absolutely nothing. I was walking past the law courts - which isn't relevant, but it's vivid

The Master is like Voldemort. The half-formed Voldemort. (Well, that's going to in my memory -- and staring at the blank space in my head, when I simply thought,

cost. We can't afford that many FX, to make him a CGI creature. Maybe he's just John suddenly, out of the blue, with no planning: what if Esme Harkness had children?!

Simm looking rough.) He can't steal wallets and clothes; he's a wretch, he's homeless, Esme Harkness (I love that surname) was a retired prostitute living in faded elegance

he's living in the hinterlands of the city like a wild, lost thing. Well, no, still with a bit in the hotel. She was played by Susan Hampshire, who was glorious and brilliant.

of charm and wit. But he's dying (that fits in with my earlier half-skeleton idea - it Esme was everyone's favourite character. (In the very last episode, she inherited a was meant to be!), he's powerless, he's feeding off the life force of tramps and things. fortune - and bought the hotel!) It struck me that a woman like that, in the 1920s,

Sinister scenes set near the docks, with old tramps huddled around braziers, thinking would have had children years ago - and abortions, too, but imagine if she carried two

that the Master is one of their kind ('You look a bit like that old Prime Minister...'), kids full-term, who had been given away, maybe brought up in good homes, never

then he flashes into a skeleton -- and pounces! Drains the life force! Bodies are being knowing about their real mother. Then, in this episode, cue a blackmailer who knows

found, dead tramps reduced to husks. This is nice, because I've had Wilf's Alien Watch the whereabouts of Esme's now-grown-up kids, and can give her the information in

on my mind all this time, but I've been a little worried that I'm not sure what they're return for money. Well, I wrote it. And it worked. It was a bit dark and internalised as

up to -- what UFOs are they watching exactly? All they had was a funny little scene in stories go, and I got a bit symbolic by making the whole thing revolve around a game

a cafe. They were little more than set dressing. But now -- oh, now -- they're on the trail of cards (you tend to write symbolic when you're young, because you think it's deep),

of this evil vampire who's killing the homeless at night. Without knowing it, they're but Susan Hampshire made the whole thing thrilling, and the blackmailer was played

hunting down the Master! That's how the Doctor meets them. by Ian Dury -- I've worked with Ian Dury, isn't that brilliant? -- so it was a nice piece of

That's nice, but I'm skipping over the fact that all of these ideas fill about half of invention. Out of desperation.

4.17.1 have no bloody idea what happens in 4.18. Empty. It is empty. HELP! Empty, The point is, back at those law courts, in one footstep, I went from an absolutely blank

empty, empty, the story is empty. No, bollocks, worse, I know what's haunting me, page in my head to a full 60-minute plot. Simple as that. The whole plot downloaded

and this haunts every writer... I HAVE RUN OUT OF IDEAS. That's a permanent from nowhere in a single second, it really did. And I can remember the moment so

subtext to everything I ever do. I'm not sure I've admitted that before, or even looked clearly, so acutely, because in that very same second, I thought, I can do this job. I was

it in the eye. (Oh Christ, this e-mail has taken a sudden, blind turn into darkness!) young then, still wondering whether this was the right job for me, whether I'd end up

But it's a very big worry, all the time, maybe for everyone who's ever written anything, starving in an attic, whether I would run out of ideas, and in that single second, that

ever. The terror - and the profound belief in the possibility - of running out of ideas. one moment, I proved my worth. To myself. I've never forgotten it. Trouble is, it's no

Sometimes, a journalist asks it. 'Do you think you'll ever run out of ideas?' Said with a consolation now. Well, it is during some dark hours, but that positive stuff just isn't smile, the bastards. And I bet every writer gives a cheery little answer, hiding the clutch as insistent and pervasive as the bad stuff. I love thinking about that moment, but it's

at their throat, because the unsayable has just been said. It does haunt you. Always. precious and fleeting. What If I Run Out Of Ideas? lingers every bloody day. And here

Literally, always. And it must be possible. It must be. it is, flexing its muscles with 4.18.

I can remember clearly when the opposite of that happened. There was a very definite This e-mail is so long that I'm beginning to get paranoid -- if my PC freezes or

moment when I first gained some confidence in my ability to generate stories, when something, it'll be lost (I should write this safely in a Word document, but e-mail feels

I realised that I was genuinely full of ideas and stood a good chance of making it as a more immediate and real) -- so it's nowhere near finished, but this is a good point to writer. (And I don't often dwell on the positive, you might have noticed, so let me try send anyway.

for once.) It must have been 1995 or 1996, and I was working on The Grand. That show Many happy returns, Benjamino. Hey, this is your present.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
EIGHTEEN: THREE E-MAILS (AND AN EPIPHANY)			

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2008 03:30:51 GMT
 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2008 19:03:48 GMT

RE:

4.17/4.18

RE:

4.17/4.18»I've already told the best Master story ever«
 I'm really surprised. I'm kind of gobsmacked. Do you really like it that much? (That's

You're wrong. You've told the second-best Master story ever. Since he was all-powerful rhetorical. I'm not fishing for compliments.) Wow! That's made me so happy. I justin The Sound of Drums and Last of the Time Lords, smooth, smarmy and oh-so-New went out to Tesco's - that long walk I walk every day, usually with sloping shoulders,Labour, the way to go in 4.17/4.18 is to make the Master scrabbling and desperate. and bowed head, and heavy heart, because all the problems weigh me down (I hateHobo Master. Voldemort Master! I remember saying to you, months back, how much that walk!) - and I sort of strolled along thinking, yes, maybe I can do it. That feltI love that idea. Vampire Master, yeah! I swear you're on the right track. wonderful. Is it really that good?! I should read those e-mails back to myself. I just sort

What do you mean you've run out of ideas? Nonsense. Listen, that scene in the of splurged it all out. And I've got more to say. But Christ, turning all these ideas intopublic toilet, with the businessman, is brilliant. Okay, so you don't show it all. You can't. a script is a whole heap of hard work, about to start any day now.You show some of it, maybe. You don't show the Master slashing up a businessman, The funny thing is, do you know what happened in that last e-mail? I've writtenobviously. Or shagging him! But you show the businessman entering the toilets, the you a treatment! That did me good last night. I had a powerful night's sleep. I wokeMaster at the washbasins, an exchanged glance, that's all, the Master turns back to up invigorated. (You may charge me a psychiatrist's fee.) There am I crowing thatthe mirror, the businessman enters a cubicle... and the very next shot is the Master treatments are beneath me, but that's what I just did - and it worked.walking away from the toilet block, in the businessman's clothes. Brrrrr! Right. So. More. Onwards. Back to the plot. I keep wondering whether the Doctor

It's the most exciting part of your entire e-mail - honestly - because there, in your should have an Ood Spirit Guide throughout the story, appearing behind his shoulder

description of that one, thrilling scene, is precisely what's new, and fresh, and so during quiet moments, or even frozen moments of action, talking cryptically, like

wonderfully unsettling about these episodes. That scene feels raw, and rough (good spirit guides do. He's really there; he's not in the Doctors imagination. He's projecting

rough!), and different - and sordid, actually. No, not sordid. Avaricious! That's the himself, mentally, into the Doctors journey, not just to advise, but also to judge.

word. (Is it? Do I even know what that means?) That's the Master this time around. Except, while I've had this image in my head for months now, it isn't suggesting any

He's avaricious (I'm sticking with it), and that's electrifying. You've nailed it already. dialogue or great moments. It's a bit dreamlike, isn't it? I hate dream material. And

I keep thinking of The Dark Knight. Heath Ledger in The Dark Knight. The Joker. now that I've shoved Wilf into the mix, there's no need for the Doctor to have a

Scenes in back alleys, gutters, and prison cells. Who needs Christmas cheer?! You'll secret mentor. He can talk to Cramps. I keep picturing Wilf and the Doctor together

blow EastEnders out of the water. - running, laughing, hunting the Master across urban wasteland - and gradually Ood

You're doing exactly what I said in my Introduction to The Writer's Tale: you're driven Boy just fades.

by expectation - by meeting it, by confounding it, by surpassing it. You've got the Talking of Wilf, I keep coming back to that cafe scene. I could never work out how

Master hanging out with tramps. The former Prime Minister! Living like a vagabond. or why they were sitting opposite a Donna who doesn't barge into the actual scene.

Like a bum. Like a monster. How angry would that make him? And angry is good. What, do they see her by coincidence? That's rubbish. Eliminate coincidence! Then,

Angry is scary. Desperate Master is much more frightening. Desperate and mad. today, it occurred to me: it's Wilf's plan. He takes the Doctor to this cafe deliberately.

Hypnotising
tramps!

The
Doctor is wondering why. What's so special about this place? Turns out it's

Also, if he's Hobo Master, Bum Master, a down-and-out, hanging with drunks, opposite where Donna works. No, opposite where her fiance works! Wilf has brought

drug addicts and bums, then you could call the episode... wait for it... wait for it... the Doctor to spy on her. (Great chance to see Donna with her not knowing she's

are you ready? You could call the episode... The Sound of Bums! Me so funny. Oh, my being watched, parking on double yellows, beeping the horn, arguing with the traffic

sides. I should turn professional. But seriously - stop complaining that you haven't warden, salty old pre-Doctor-Donna. I love that Donna.) The fiance comes bumbling

got enough story, because this sounds amazing. Really, honestly, I promise. I'm right. out - nice, big, harmless man - but Wilf is so sad. This man (Sam, Samuel, Sammy?) is

Because you know what? I'm hooked already. a dreamer, a romantic, a bit like the Doctor, but with none of the Doctor's gumption.

And David's last line is pure class, for so many reasons. It's beautiful, and understated, He has these wild and crazy schemes that end up losing money. God help the two of

and unexpected. See, there you go again, confounding expectations. them. They're going to end up living in a tiny, rundown flat. Oh, and Donna steps out

of
the car... and she's hugely pregnant! It's all a bit wistful, setting up the final scenes

of
4.18, where the Doctor appears at the church and gives Donna a wedding present. A

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
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lottery ticket. Til keep that. You never know, I might get lucky for once!' Ahh, Donna No one's going to be hurt. They'll just take the end result, whatever it is, and go home Noble, millionaire. (Oh, she'd be married. She'd have a new surname. A new surname to cure their people. The Master would suss that they're there immediately. So wouldfor Donna?! Lyons? Donna Lyons?) the Doctor, though he's got to be one step behind for this part of the story. Maybe

Do you see what I mean about not needing Ood Sigma in there? Although, he'd the Master could befriend the aliens, pretend to help them, then turn the tables on serve a nice cuppa in the cafe. It's funny how much I love that cafe. It's absolutely everyone, like he does. central to me. Never mind the sci-fi, or the story, or the monsters; that cafe scene is I like these aliens. I was thinking today, could we have faces that are runny? Therewhere the heart of it is. Two people connecting over a cup of tea. Two ancient, wise needs to be something wrong with them, genetically, like they're melting. Imagine if men, keeping themselves warm, just before Christmas. they had soft, sticky faces, all drooping jowls and hangdog expressions -- because they

Elsewhere, that Geneva thing keeps lingering. A few months ago, remember I could be quite funny, this lot -- and I wonder if Neill Gorton could build something mentioned the Master flying out to Geneva, after his Real Hustle stings? Why Geneva? where, maybe, they have concealed holes at the top of the prosthetic mask through I feel like the Master, this identity-fraud Master, with his new persona, Mr Smart which a runnier version of their skin is pumped, constantly. Not water, something Businessman, needs to find something on Earth that will give him power, so he uses his thicker and gloopier. Throughout every scene, they've thick, putty-coloured gloop new contacts -- he can hack into UNIT or Torchwood databases, and all sorts -- to find, dripping slowly down over their eyebrows and mouths. They're constantly wet and well, I don't know, some sort of project, some sort of science project, that he can take runny. Ewww! Nice, though. Good for kids. The Runny People! (The Bashboli. Is that control of and turn into a world-dominating machine. (What, though? Mind control? a good name? Hmm, maybe.) They'll

be the last alien race I create. He's done that. He's done bloody everything!) Maybe some top-secret, James Bond- Talking of monsters... I phoned up Will Cohen the other day, to ask about my plantype lair in the Swiss Alps, one of those houses built into a mountainside, incredibly for every human on Earth to become the Master. Expensive, obviously. He promised swish and sleek, where some multimillionaire is working on... well, I keep thinking to get back to me, but hasn't had time yet. However, there's a certain amount of doable of The Lazarus Experiment. Bloody Lazarus has beaten me to it! Because that's exactly FX that we can take for granted - multiple passes against green-screen, maybe even what I need here. I need an old man pouring money into genetic research. When the modelling a full CGI John Simm-head, getting people to wear green masks, then Master turns up, he has all the knowledge to take over the experiment and turn it into imposing John's face on them for huge crowds. But I worry about how much FX what, what, what?! But that's a good shape for a story. I'd just have to work hard to un- it's going to take up. If there are three people in a scene, that's three Masters. The Lazarus it. Then again, Harold Saxon funded the Lazarus research, so I could use that multiple passes are going to break the budget. I've got to get the Doctor off the planet to make the similarities look deliberate. (That's a bit fan-ish, isn't it? I loved The quite early in 4.18, I think, so I was thinking about the Runny People and... well, *Lazarus Experiment, but it's hardly the one that I expected to be referencing for the* they'd have a spaceship off-Earth, wouldn't they? In orbit. With a handy transmat. The big finale!)

transmatting away from the Master's evil plan is a lot like Martha at the end

Mind you, it's all a bit dry - Switzerland, the sleek base, the experiments, the of The Sound of Drums, but hey ho. Now, I hadn't seen this coming, honestly, this isn't

millionaire, it's dull for kids. This top-secret project needs aliens! It needs to be clever deliberate, but if the Doctor escapes to the spaceship... and the Runny People, they're

enough, scientifically, to have required alien involvement. They should be secret aliens. humble, they're ordinary, they're even a bit amateur, so... look, it's that ordinary alien

The millionaire shouldn't know that they're there. They're disguised as humans, only spaceship! It's back! The original idea for the one-part finale, bleeding though! Weird

unmasking when they go behind-the-scenes for secret alien conversations, like

aliens how things like that happen. Actually, maybe it's not weird at all. It's a natural process

do. 'The plan is proceeding!' and all that. Although, actually, they don't feel evil. I don't of using what I've got.

know why, but they feel like they're there to help. The Master is there to be evil. He's But is it right that an epic two-parter ends with a showdown on a crumbling little

centre stage.

Actually, put like that, it sounds attractive. Maybe if I work hard on the ship

I was walking past Technquest this morning, and I realised that I'm channelling itself, if I make it like The Little Engine That Could, then it might pay off in the end. It

The Faceless Ones? Because this alien race needs to be sick, or dying, and they need had better pay off, because this bloody spaceship is determined to appear, no matter

help. They need some sort of genetic thing that will cure their race, so they're using what. I can't stop it.

the millionaire's top-secret scientific project for their own ends. Not nastily, though. Anyway. Look, I've never articulated this, but it's time I told you about the Two

Yes, the Two Doors! I'm not a hundred per cent sure what the Two Doors are

3 The Faceless Ones is a 1967 Doctor Who serial concerning the Chameleons, an alien race that has been damaged by an explosion on their home world and is reliant on a scientific process of identity theft to sustain and extend their lives. yet, but they've been in my head for such a long time now. I've never even told you

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
EIGHTEEN: THREE E-MAILS (AND AN EPIPHANY)			

about them, because it's easier to talk about the Master, and Wilf, and Runny People. The key is the technician. The dumb sod who got trapped in Booth #2. This manActually, they've become so embedded, I haven't told you about them, because it's like should have had only two or three lines throughout. He should have been no one. Justmentioning that the sky is blue. But I'm beginning to worry about them. Big time. a bloke. (I wondered if he should be a Runny Person, but no, he should be completelyYou see, Army of Ghosts and Doomsday were written around Two Levers. Everything ordinary.) He's unimportant. He's insignificant. He's useless. The Doctor gives his lifethat happened pivoted around the fact that Two Levers opened the dimensional breach for a no one. (Because there's no such thing as a no one.) And the Doctor shouldn't dobetween our universe and the parallel one in which Rose would become trapped, and it easily. He knows what's going to happen. Oh, the drama in it! The sheer drama! Heultimately the Doctor would hold on to one lever, and Rose would fall from the second. should rant and rave at this man through the glass before opening the door. 'Who areLiterally, the whole architecture of that story is built around those levers. And now I've you? Who the hell are you?! Who the hell are you to do this to me?!' Railing againstgot Two Doors. Except, the Two Doors are more complicated than the Two Levers. I death. But then of course, with dignity, the Doctor opens the door. He steps inside. Hekeep thinking about them, and I can't work out how they operate, and that's going to saves the nobody's life. Because he's the Doctor. He has no choice. The Tenth Doctor'sbe vital. The closer these scripts get, the more it's bugging me. This is what I mean... ending should be so small and intimate, after all the sturm and drang. He's saved theThe millionaire's top-secret project has some sort of power plant within the main world already; now he saves one man called Keith. And in doing so, dies.chamber. Two Doors. Two separate booths, maybe. Two small, glass rooms. It's like -- I But I'm still faking those Two Doors. Explaining it here has made it feel a littledon't know, I'm guessing, I can't see it, it's maddening -- it's like some sort of pressure better. Even if I don't manage to build the Two Doors into the script, the sacrifice willsystem, a radiation room, whereby an operator has to be in one of the rooms at any one be the same; giving your life for a stranger. How Doctor is that? At the same time,time. This whole chamber is massively radioactive, all

being siphoned through these I'm thinking, if you're eight years old, have you waited all this time for a bloody glasstwo rooms, somehow, and the safety devices demand that one operator is present at all door to open? A man called Keith vanquishes your childhood hero! Shouldn't thetimes. No, the operator has to be actually inside the booth. Only by closing the first Doctor be suspended over a precipice - or, better, holding a dying Wilf in his arms,door can the second door open to let the occupant out. You have to go through the and giving his life force or something to save the old man? Hmm. But maybe I canfirst door, close it behind you -- the closing is vital -- and then press the door control play with those expectations. Maybe you'll be expecting the Wilf sacrifice. I can eveninside that booth so that the second booth will open and the operator inside can go foreshadow that with red-herring lines like Wilf saying, 'Don't worry about me. I'mon his tea break. Is this making sense? It's a bit blurry. These Two Doors need to be not important!' You're convinced that Wilf is going to die somehow, and then Keithstrongly established. We need to see them operate in 4.17, really clearly, even boringly, takes you completely by surprise and -we should see them operate two or three times, and repeat in 4.18. And here's why... Hold on.This is how the Doctor will die. He's going to have to step inside Booth #1 to free Oh God.someone in Booth #2, and that's going to irradiate him. Because -- oh, I've never told OH MY GOD!you this, it's obvious -- it's not the Master who causes the Doctor to regenerate. No What if it's Wilf in Booth #2? Tapping on the glass? With the radiation count rising,way. Oh no. You should spend the whole story thinking that's going to happen... and about to flood? Poor Bernard's sad face. The Doctor realising that he has to openthen the story ends, the Master has been destroyed (maybe he should be reduced to Booth #1 to save the old man. He survived the Master, but it's bloody Wilf who bringsdust this time; we can't have another dead body for the Doctor to grieve over), and him down! The marvellous thing is, Wilf would know what's at stake. Wilf would bethe Doctor is standing there, shattered, amazed, 'I'm alive!' Not even grieving for saying, 'Leave me here. Don't do it. I'm old. I've had my time. Don't kill yourself.the Master - well, maybe a line or two - but actually thinking he's changed events You're more important than me.' I've been living with Keith the stranger for all theseto prevent his regeneration. And then - this is the point - he realises, behind him, months -I love him, I love the randomness of it - but now, oh, just think of the acting,there's some dumb bloody technician stuck in Booth #2, which is going to flood with Bernard and David! Through glass! Christ, I'm tearful just typing this. I'm not kidding,radiation. Someone has to open Booth #1 to

let him out. In stepping into Booth #1, I really am. It's making me cry. Oh wow. Bernard bloody Cribbins! Like it was always and triggering Booth #2's door, the Doctor opens up the radiation - the whole glass meant to be, that strange destiny binding together the Doctor and the Noble-Mottsbooth floods with red light, agony, and he's dying. It's a slow death. His hand gives a all this time. Ever since he bumped into that funny little man in a deserted London warning glow, but he can fight it for a little bit; that's when he says goodbye to Wilf on Christmas Eve, with Kylie Minogue, it's been destined for Wilfred Mott to end his (Til see you at the wedding'), and sets off on his last trip, to visit Sarah Jane, and life. Ohhh yeah! Martha, and Jack, and everyone. Ben, Ben, Ben, this Great Correspondence is MAGNIFICENT! I thought of that

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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idea right here and now. 'Where do you get your ideas from?' HERE!!! I'm typing so him to Switzerland! Those in the know, like Julie Andrews, have been following eventsfast that this is full of typos, and I'll have to go back and correct it once I've calmed in London, they know that an insane alien genius is on the loose (the Lucy Saxon/down. The Tenth Doctor gives his life for Wilfred Mott. OH MY GOD. Or even burning prison-link would interest a lot of people), and they've been hunting himOMG! That's a real OMG! Oh, I'm thrilled. Those sad eyes of Bernard's. David staring down, too, because Julie Andrews needs a genius to complete the Immortality Gate.at him. 'Doctor. Let me die.' CHRIST! I did love Keith. I loved the Doctor's fleeting That all clicked into place because Silence of the Lambs was on ITV2 tonight. Yourage at Keith, although he could still do that with Wilf. 'Why did you step inside know that scene where Hannibal Lecter is transferred to another city, and they holdthere?!' That's exciting. I'd never thought of that, yet it's been staring me in the face. him prisoner overnight in this huge room, surrounded by guards and squads of

Brilliant, brilliant, brilliant. I love that. Brilliant. I do laugh at the thought of saying police, because everyone knows he's so dangerous. That's what the Master would be

to you, 'I've run out of ideas,' when these e-mails are bloody endless, and they've made in Switzerland. Julie Andrews (it's very funny, typing 'Julie Andrews') would be so

me feel a little better... cautious of this madman, while still needing his knowledge. The image of a psychotic,

But then, hold on, wait a minute, I look at 4.18, and the vast hollows of empty brilliant man in that film is so powerful, I'm inspired. Especially when Hannibal

space. Look at me saying, 'The Master is reduced to dust,' when I've got no bloody escapes. Of course, the Master won't escape in the same way as Hannibal. He won't

cut
off people's faces and wear them as a mask. (Maybe not!) You never know, though.

idea how. Oh, bollocks, there goes the excitement. That didn't last long, did it? That

The Master's powers of hypnotism could give me an equivalent of that. I've never used

constant panic at the back of my head feels like a dull scream. Actually, it's not even

those. Well, I did, I made it worldwide with the Archangel Network -- but a bit of old-

that exciting. It's more like a moan, or a clock ticking or something. From the moment

fashioned 'Look into my eyes' wouldn't go amiss now, especially if those eyes are in a I wake up. Following me everywhere.

skeleton head.4

Where were we? The Immortality Gate. There's a title for 4.17. It's the millionaire's

Thinking about the Master and the Immortality Gate... those Runny People are

project. The Lazarus Experiment was about growing younger (yes, please!), but this

kind of pesky. Why would any alien race need to come to Earth to do their research?

project is about becoming immortal, a self-renewing cell structure that would last for

They've got to be cleverer than us. But hold on! What if they're there to stop the all eternity. Who wouldn't want that? (Me!) It involves some big gate, some sort of

millionai project? Because immortality is banned. That still makes the Runny

arch in which you stand and get zapped and immortalised. This is where the Master

People quite benign; they're just there to throw in a bit of sabotage, and then sod

off.

stands, having replaced the controls with, er, some sort of, um, human-slash-Time-

That's why Julie Andrews' experiment isn't working. That's why she needs the Master.

Lord-genetic-broadcast system, transplanting himself into every human on Earth. But

The Runny Men become victims of the Master's coup, too. I still can't work out how

I like that name, the Immortality Gate. That's good. More importantly, it's what the

the Master switches the project from 'immortality' to 'every human looks like me',

whole story is about. (Listen to me, using a theme!) The Doctor wants to live, the

but I suspect I'll have to use my greatest technobabble flimflam yet. Or maybe just 'he's

Master wants to live, and this millionaire's top-secret project is about living for ever.

switched the circuits! Yes, that'll do. Yes.

Neat. Nice. That could sing.

Christ oh mighty, I'm taking a break now. More to come. Yes, more! I haven't even

A couple of days ago, we were talking about casting with Andy Pryor. I said that

got to Donna yet. (Me to Julie this afternoon, about halfway through writing this e-

I'd love to cast Julie Andrews in something. She'd be perfect for the millionaire. She'd

mail: 'What if Catherine was in this Special properly, not just in the background. Like,

be seeking immortality for her children. Yeah, I'd believe that. That would give this

Donna

Noble is back!' Julie: 'Oh, well, good! God, yes.' We'll see. I'm still not sure.

millionaire more character. But I've been stuck with this Julie Andrews character being

That's

a separate chain of thoughts to describe.) However... while I've been typing to

located in Switzerland, because her plot fitted the old identity-fraud Master, but now

you,

all hell has been breaking loose. BBC News has contacted us saying that they're

that the Master is a seething, dying wreck, eating tramps on wastelands, how the hell

consideri

running a story that would basically say that the Doctor Who team have

does he get to Geneva? How do those two plots tie together? Then, today, it sort of

been

seriously considering and talking to various actors about taking over from David,

clicked. I've always wanted a sequence where the Doctor, Wilf and the Alien Watch

and

so it's looking likely that David may soon announce when he's leaving. The cheeky

hunt down the Master at night, running over derelict buildings, hounding the beast

bastards.

We're being undercut by our own bloody news service! E-mails are flying like

-- and they corner him, and the Doctor is so wary, because he knows he's going to die,

crazy.

It's mental.

and the Master is skeleton-ing on and off, wanting the Doctor's life force... when a

blazing light slams down! Troops abseil in! There's a helicopter right above them! These

4 In Doctor Who 3.12/3.13, the Archangel Network was the main phone network on Earth, broadcasting a signal of four beats,

designed

by the Master for the purposes of mind control.

private security troops grab the Master, and haul him up into the air. They're taking

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

We think we've shut them down for now, but this'll make you laugh - it's from Piers - 'I'd suggest sticking to Operation Cobra, unless people start coming forward with tangible evidence that David is leaving.' Operation Cobra! The plan for David to announce his departure live on air at the NTAs, should he win, is officially called Cobra! We use that in Torchwood. It's the government's crisis name for Cabinet Office Briefing Room A. And now we're using it for David! That's made me hoot. But if BBC News ruins our NTA plan, I'll... I'll... oh, I don't know. Bollocks.

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CHAPTER NINETEEN

THE COBRA'S TALE

In which Richard and Judy are compromised,

David Tennant's face is carved into a pumpkin, and Operation

Cobra is launched, then aborted, then launched again

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 17
OCTOBER 2008 21:04:35 GMT

RE: 4.17/4.18



And... and... AND?! What about Donna? What happens next? Damn you and your

cliflhangers.

Hey, am I part of Operation Cobra now that you've, urn, told me about Operation

Cobra? Was that information classified? Will you have to kill me? Isn't the first rule of

Operation Cobra: never talk about Operation Cobra?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 18 OCTOBER 2008 19:03:48 GMT

RE: 4.17/4.18

I'm off on my travels: Swansea tonight, and London tomorrow to present one of the

Teaching Awards (the New Teacher of the Year works at the school where my mum,

dad and granddad taught), and then Manchester on Monday. 1 Phew! Bad timing,

though, because I want to tell you more about Donna. Still, that can stew for a few

days. My ideas might improve with age. Besides, I'm dying to know how it all ends.

Got any ideas?!

1 Natalie Richards, a drama teacher at Bishop Gore School in Sketty, Swansea, was named the SSAT Outstanding New

Teacher of the Year at the annual Teaching Awards ceremony at the London Palladium, on 19 October 2008.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINETEEN: THE COBRA'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 23
OCTOBER 2008 14:22:47 GMT I mean. Not Cranford. Boo to Cranford.
All those bonnets make me edgy. Besides, the **OPERATION X-**
MAS Christmas Day
cliffhanger is irresistible...Ah well. We got so close with your Christmas transmission plan.
Yet, not all is lost...

Julie just phoned. This has been batted to and fro between the schedulers and
us **FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY**
23 OCTOBER 2008 23:50:18 GMT

for over a week now. In the end, they thought that two episodes of Doctor Who
on **RE: OPERATION X-MAS** Christmas Day would be too much. They've a double
EastEnders and a double Cranford I did wobble on the thought of a Christmas Day
cliffhanger, but I think I've wobbled to schedule, both of which, in fairness, have ratings to
match ours. But the key point back. It's odd, and different, and new, but we've sort of
survived anything -- transmitting was range. The BBC has to show its range on Christmas Day,
as a showpiece. This before 7pm, changing companions every year... all the
things that shouldn't work have means Doctor Who, EastEnders, Cranford, the news, and
probably a sitcom. worked, so the sheer newness of the Christmas Day
cliffhanger seems exciting to me.

But! Jane still loves the idea of scheduling 4.16 a little earlier in the year. So,
how (The Master should turn to camera and say, 'Merry Christmas... no, Merry
Mastermas!' about 4.16 on Saturday 19 December, 4.17 on Christmas Day, then 4.18 on
New Or is that crap?) It's definitely the best scheduling we're going to get
(and I love Cranford Year's Day? Bear in mind, New Year's Day is traditionally the highest-
rating day of the - *don't knock the ladies in bonnets*), so it's time I turned it to
our advantage. It's better lot. That's a magnificent slot. It makes sense. You can picture it.
That's been my worry, than our old pattern of 4.16 on Christmas Day, then the remaining
two episodes thrown in constant scheduling, with 4.18 in some sort of two-days-after-New-
Year, neither- away God knows when. I hated the vagueness of that -- it was driving
me mad -- so I'm here-not-there slot... but New Year's Day is big. It's branded. Julie asked me
whether really, properly glad that you kick-started this discussion. We've ended up in a
much I liked it, and it is very attractive. The human race transformed into the Master
on better place as a result. I know the story is about death, but actually the bigger
story, Christmas Day, cue credits, come back next week!
Lovely. the whole Doctor Who story, is about the new guy.
That's what the marvellously named

It forces a strange dogleg into the story, because 4.17 would be set on Christmas
Day Operation Cobra is all about. New, new, new. Once the Eleventh Doctor appears at
theor Christmas Eve, then the action would carry on, continuously, into 4.18... but
a end of 4.18, that's what everyone's going to be talking about. 'Did you see him?

WhatChristmas Day setting would look odd on New Year's Day, wouldn't it? But I can write did he say? What's he going to wear?' Kids will go crazy until the start of Series Five, andaround that. Everyone still has their decorations up on New Year's Day, so the setting that's absolutely right.would make sense. I'd just avoid any specific references in 4.18 to the actual day. When

the Doctor goes off on his sojourn to visit all his ex-companions, at the end of 4.18,
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER 2008 01:51:19 GMT

then it's New Year's Day. Donna's wedding is on New Year's Day. That's sweet. All those RE: OPERATION X-MASchurch bells ringing, people celebrating, out

with the old and in with the new... oh, Well, I'm convinced. But not by the 'Merry Mastermas' line. You're right, that's crap,that fits a dying Doctor. I could write that beautifully. New beginnings. We'd see the leave it.new Doctor on the first day of 2010. Better still, the Tenth Doctor's epitaph would

read '2005--2010'. Julie said, 'They always wanted us to do five years, and now we
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER 2008 12:18:33 GMT

have.' (Well, six, technically, but I know what she means.) It feels good, and right, and OPERATION COBRAproper, and celebratory. I know we don't get the symmetry of a Doctor born and dying The Cobra team -- Cobra!!! -- is secretly arranging an interview with David on Tuesday,on Christmas Day, but it's only one week extra. to be filmed by Confidential, confidentially, and released to all media outlets on

Of course, plans change, and Jane will move on, so Julie is on a mission to demand Wednesday night as soon as he's made his announcement, should he win the award,that this is set in stone. I'm going to start writing it any day now (er, maybe), and they need someone to interview him, and your name is on the list! Don't get excited,I need to seed in all this Christmas and New Year stuff. The last thing I need is a because it's been nixed since, with the thinking that it needs to be an official BBCscheduler changing his mind next November. Fingers crossed. For now, though, I'm Person. But how funny! My name was on the list, too, along with the note: 'Perhaps ahappy. In a big and busy BBC, it's not half bad. little too cosy for this release?' Cosy?! That's worse than 'jolly'.

Everything
is changing with Cobra every half-hour. It's all so jittery and tense, partlyFROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 23 OCTOBER
2008 18:35:07 GM T because it's the first combination of both production
teams: Piers and Steven areRE: OPERATION X-
MAS Deluded in this, too.

In fact, it's more their announcement than it is ours.The more I think about it, the more I like it. David regenerating on New Year's Day,

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINETEEN: THE COBRA'S TALE

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 24
OCTOBER 2008 18:19:21 GMT John Simm, John Simm, they're all
John Simm! Maybe they stare at her and howl.
RE: OPERATION
COBRA They howl
when they see someone who's not like them. They chase her. All these
What with all this
Operation Cobra jazz, maybe we should have a code name for this John Simms
chase her, like a witch-hunt. Anyone unchanged is hunted down. Thise-mail
correspondence. isn't
awakening Donna's memory, but there's a danger that it could, at any minute.

Until
it does, she's the old Donna, scared and horrified, not knowing what to do. The
FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER 2008
18:39:25 GMT Doctor, who's in Geneva, would know this and would
need to save her, which gives
RE: OPERATION
COBRA him something
personal to fight for. 'I've got to save the world' isn't half as powerful
We should be Operation
Asp. I don't know why, but Asp is a very funny name for as T've got to save
Donna! Especially if he adds, 'Without awakening her memory!' a snake. Cleopatra should
have tried some other means. I always used to laugh in She's cornered in an
alley, surrounded by a circle of Simms, and it should feel
likeschool. they're
going to rip her apart. They're snarling! As the Simms advance (how many FX

shots
is this going to need?), CU on Donna, because she's starting to remember! Wild
FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 24 OCTOBER 2008
18:19:21 GMT images of Ood, and Davros, maybe even a Giant Wasp,
flickering in front of her eyes
RE: OPERATION
COBRA - and she hasn't
a clue what's happening - then as a Simm reaches out, she shouts, That'll
do. 'NO!!!' FX
circle of energy blasts from her head, knocking out the Simms! She's left

surrounded
by unconscious bodies. What the hell did she do? (We'll discover later that
FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER
2008 01:06:05 GMT the Doctor
Donna part of her mind is turning itself
into a weapon. Or something.)
RE: OPERATION
COBRA Or maybe a
great big spaceship descends and saves her, beaming her up -- because I've spent a lot of the
past two days trawling through The Next Doctor. Almost all the the Doctor and
Wilf, by now, have escaped to the Runny People's ship in orbit. Or FX work is done, and it's

looking fantastic (oh, the CyberKing!), but there are still both! She blasts the circle of Simms, and then a great big spaceship descends -- Look, bits that don't work. An FX shot of the Cybershade jumping onto the wall. Bad green I was going to type all that on Monday, but I couldn't stop. Still, it's noticeable that out ofscreen. Bad wire work. Odd jump cuts, from CUs to wide shots, which I didn't like at those options, a) is one line, and b) is a big paragraph. Is that telling me something? Or am the time but just sort of accepted. My fault, really. I should have flagged it up earlier, I so short of plot for 4.18 that I'm just inventing incident? I don't know. but I was knackered. Yesterday, I decided that I couldn't watch those mistakes go out

on Christmas Day, so I waded in. Back to the Edit. We trawled through the original
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER 2008 01:39:08 GMT

rushes, finding alternative shots, and new orders to sequences, and the repairs are
RE: OPERATION COBRA looking much better. We might need to reshoot a Cybershade, but I'll be glad we did > am I so short of plot for 4.18 that I'm just inventing incident? «it, come 25 December. Um. Isn't that your job?

I've failed to conclude last week's Maybe update. I will, I will, soon, I promise. It's by choice, though. This Donna stuff is clashing in my head, big time, and I'm letting the
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER 2008 01:47:01 GMT

thoughts settle. E-mailing you might interrupt the process. But maybe not, because
RE: OPERATION COBRA that bit in last week's e-mail when I thought of trapping Wilf in the booth, while I walked into that one. Thing is, you're right. The worry is, the more I use Donna, the actually writing to you, was very exciting. I can't work out what's best: do I a) stick to closer I creep to using what's inside her head. I certainly can't have her saving the day the original plan and keep Donna in the background, or b) she's Donna, it's Catherine at the climax of 4.18, because she did that in Journey's End. Then again, the chance to Tate, she's loved, she's a brilliant actress, it's Christmas Day, so why not use her? I can have a witch-hunt through the streets, with all those John Simms, that's the point of think of several brilliant Donna and Master scenes that would make it worthwhile. the Master taking over the human race. That's the pay-off. The sheer nightmare of it Plus, the Master turns the human race into copies of himself, but I've got no one to all. Who better than Donna to go through that? *observe it, apart from the Doctor and Wilf. I need someone to see it, to be terrified,* The other day, I described the Master-in-disguise idea - living on the streets, feeding and I reckon Donnas altered brain structure, following Journey's End, could make her off the life force of tramps - to John Simm, and he loved it. He really loved the blond immune to the takeover, so she'd be watching as Sylvia transforms in front of her... hair. Actually, he suggested white hair. It'd be good if it were all rough and punky. Also,

Donna runs into the street, freaked out. Neighbours opening doors - John Simm, he suggested, every time the Master kills a tramp, he leaves the letter 'M'

scrawled onto

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a nearby oil barrel or something. A calling card. I love the 'M' idea, like he's luring the weird that we're not discussing David's departure. But I can't alert anyone. OperationDoctor with it. What's that old film, an old black-and-white film, where Peter Lorre Cobra bans me from telling Ebury or Cactus TV or anyone. Yikes.plays a murderer - I think he's a child-murderer - but someone sees him and chalks

(Is it called Mi Yes, it is.) Peter Lorre whistles all the way though it, this creepy little **RE: OPERATION COBRA** tune. It's really sinister. Perhaps I could look pale and exhausted, then faint and cause a commotion if David's

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 27 OCTOBER 2008
16:39:11 GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,
MONDAY 27 OCTOBER 2008 12:17:21
GMT RE: OPERATION COBRARE: OPERATION
COBRA

People always think that award ceremonies are a lie, and that you're told in advance,
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T
DAVIES, MONDAY 27 OCTOBER 2008 16:47:26 GMT

but you're not -- honest! Imagine if winners had to clearly lie on camera. It would be **RE: OPERATION COBRA** obvious. ITV would be taken off air for fraud. So we're powerless -- which we're not On David's

regeneration, you're quoted in the press release as saying: 'I might drop anused to! We love a bit of power, Julie and me! But we've just got to sit back and cling anvil on his head. Or maybe a piano. A radioactive piano.' Um, you're not taking this on for the ride. The only reason we'll know a bit in advance -- like, an hour or so, after seriously, are you?the voting has closed and it's all been counted -- is because of the live feed, and the

RSC, and the sheer complexity of getting David to the right place at the right time.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 27 OCTOBER 2008 16:52:06 GMT

They have to provide for every option. In effect, it's no different to all those awards

RE: OPERATION COBRAceremonies where the winner can't be there and there's a pre-recorded speech... but The PR people e-mailed me about that quote: 'You've got a day in which to changethis is Doctor Who, and therefore has to be more complicated, more secret, and more your mind.' Everyone's a critic.insane.

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2008 23:57:26 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 27 OCTOBER 2008 12:19:44 GMT

RE: OPERATION COBRA
RE: OPERATION COBRA

very almost Cobra Day! Happy Cobra Day, Russell! I keep thinking about ourI did wonder. I didn't think voting closed until Wednesday afternoon. interview with Richard and Judy -- isn't it going to be virtually unusable? Chances are,

It's

resignation will be all over the papers come Thursday morning, and they'reFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 27 OCTOBER 2008 12:25:19 GMT

transmitting Friday night. (That'll teach them not to transmit live.) What do we do ifRE: OPERATION COBRA

asked about, like, how long David is planning to stay for? Seriously? I can't reallyThe phone lines close at 6pm on Wednesday, so Julie thinks we might be told by pass out.6.30pm, if at all. But I've just realised, you and me are going on Richard & Judy that

we're

afternoon... but it's not being shown until Friday.2 It'll be old news by then! It'll look

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2008 00:27:07 GMT

OPERATION COBRA2 Topical chat show Richard & Judy's New Position, made by Cactus TV and shown on UKTV digital channel Watch, was recorded 'as live', but not transmitted until two to four days

later.

tomorrow's Richard & Judy interview.

Happy Asp Day! I'm quietly in a sweat about

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not Text message from: Russellmine. Fair enough. Except Richard is fantastically barmy, and literally says anything that Sent: 29-Oct-2008 11:50pops into his head. There's no guarantee that I'd get to see them beforehand anyway. WHAT?!!!! OH NO! The Cobra just became an Adder. I might insult JulieUsually, you just meet them when you go on set, with all the mics on. If I asked to see Walters on R&J to gain some ground.them, that might set alarms ringing, because that would be so odd... Christ, what a

tightrope! It's doing my head in. It's only now that we're actually here, on the day, that I Text message from: Benrealise how bad this timing is. Sent: 29-Oct-2008 11:47

And I'll leave some vulgar messages on Jimmy Krankie's answeringFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2008 01:03:21 GMT machine.RE: OPERATION COBRA

I've always imagined Richard to be more professional than he comes across on screen.

Isn't it all a bit of an act? Or is he really that unpredictable? [That afternoon, Russell and Benjamin record an appearance on the Halloween edition of

Richard & Judy's New Position, at TV studios in Lambeth, South London. By 4.15pm,FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2008 01:07:50 GMT they're heading home (Benjamin) and to the National Television Awards (Russell), inRE: OPERATION COBRA separate cars.

But the texting continues.. .]No, Richard is mad. Brilliantly mad! When I was on their show to promote The Second

Coming, he said, "This is so fascinating, because if ever we have a guest on, and I really 3 In a pre-recorded edition of his Radio 2 programme The Russell Brand Show, broadcast on 18 October 2008, Brand and

fellow Radio 2 DJ Jonathan Ross left a series of 'lewd' messages on 78-year-old actor Andrew Sachs' answering machine,want to get to know them, I ask what their religion is, because that opens up the discussing the actor's granddaughter, Georgina Baillie. After little attention, the incident was reported in tabloid newspaper The

Moil on Sunday on 26 October, prompting a record number of complains (38,000 by 2 November) about The Russell Brandconversation and leads to fascinating stuff.' And I thought, no, you don't! You just Show, its presenters, and the BBC's editorial decisions. On 29 October, Brand resigned from the BBC. The Controller of Radio

Lesley Douglas, followed suit on 30 October, and Ross was suspended for 12 weeks without pay, pending investigations by made that up! He's never done that, ever. I've been watching. I'm that faithful viewer. the BBC Trust and broadcast regulator Ofcom.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
NINETEEN: THE COBRA'S TALE

Text message from: Russell
Russell
from: Russell
Sent: 29-Oct-2008 16:15
29-Oct-2008 19:05

Julie is nervous. She's thinking that David hasn't won.
ABORT! ABORT! The NTAs aren't allowing our press
release any more, so it's literally

Text message from: Ben
Sent: 29-Oct-2008
16:20 Text message
from: Ben

Stop panicking. Unless... oh, what if Catherine's won instead?! Is
she Sent: 29-Oct-2008 19:26

in on
Cobra? When
do the NTAs kick off? 8pm? I'm sat at home in my tux, in front of
the
TV, waiting...

Text message from: Russell
Sent: 29-Oct-2008
16:21 Text message
from: Russell

She's half in on it. Lis, Noel and Camille are not in, until
6pm, at which Sent: 29-Oct-2008 19:54
point they'll be inducted. I'm loving
this! FIVE MINUTES TO GO!!!

Text
message from: Ben
Text message from: Ben

Sent:

29-Oct-2008 19:55

Sent: 29-Oct-2008 18:10

WHAT

ARE YOU DOING TEXTING ME, THEN?!

Oh. Russell Brand has just RESIGNED.

Text message from:
Russell Text message from:
Russell
Sent: 29-Oct-2008
18:12 Sent: 29-Oct-2008
20:44

If he keeps upstaging
us...! We've got no idea
what order these awards are in. It's a nightmare.

Text message from:
Ben Text message
from: Ben
Sent 29-Oct-2008
18:15 Sent: 29-
Oct-2008

No prizes for guessing the headlines in tomorrow's papers.
'BBC 20:45

LOSES TWO STARS IN ONE NIGHT!' See if you can force Babs
Windsor When's the Hamlet interval? Can't you work
it out from that?

to resign - for the hat trick.

message from: Russell

Text message from:
Russell Sent: 29-Oct-2008
20:52
Sent: 29-Oct-2008
18:17 No, because the
NTAs are running behind schedule. Whenever that
I will kill
her. interval is,
we're in trouble...

Text message from: Russell

Sent:

29-

Oct-200818:52

[A few minutes later, at the Royal Albert Hall, David Tennant is announced as the winner of

We've heard from the NTA people! Operation Cobra is GO-GO-GO!!! the National Television Award for Outstanding Drama Performance. 'Hello, London!' he

says, via satellite from Stratford-upon-Avon's Courtyard Theatre. 'This is really, really very

Text

message

from:

Ben

exciting. Thank you to everyone who works on Doctor Who. It is the best bunch of people

Sent:

29-Oct-2008

18:55

in the world - Russell and Julie and Phil, our producers; Catherine Tate, who should win

Good old Cobra! I never doubted it. (Ahem!) Isn't the press release won of these...

issued

in

five

minutes?

'I'm very excited,' he continues, 'because, in January, I go back to Cardiff to make four

new Specials, which will see Doctor Who all the way through 2009. But,' he says, pausing

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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dramatically, 'when Doctor Who returns in 2010, it won't be with me.' There are gasps was no away for them to be turned to. Anyway,' I said, 'you can't,' because there wereand boos from the Albert Hall audience. 'We love you David!' shouts one woman. 'Now, wide-eyed kids all jamming forward, holding out annuals, storybooks, and bloodydon't make me cry,' he replies. 7 love this part, and I love this show so much, that if I don't napkins to be signed, and parents with those cameras, those bastard cameras that nevertake a deep breath and move on now, I never will -- and you'll be wheeling me out of the bloody work. I'm trying to sign things with nothing to rest on. It's so impossible toTARDIS in my bath chair. I think it's better I don't overstay my welcome. So it's been the sign something flimsy in mid-air. Especially when the pen won't write. And the Post-most brilliant, mad, life-changing time over the last three-and-a-half years... but it's not It, Ben! The Post-It is a thing of genius. Take away the Post-It, and you find yourselfover yet. I've got a whole other year to go. I'm not quitting. There's a whole 2009 to go before shouting at some goggling kid, above the noise, 'What's your name?' 'Meep.' 'What's I leave.

J your name?
'Meep.' 'WHAT'S YOUR NAME?!!' 'Meep.' 'What, Jack? Jason? John?

Joe?

What. Is. Your. NAME?!!!' And that's just the first stage. Next, it's 'How do you

Text	message	from:
Ben		spell that?' One girl's
name was Jessamond. Lovely kid, but 'J, E, double S -' What,		

Sent:	29-Oct-2008
21:25	sorry, pardon?
WHAT?!	

YOU DID IT!!! Operation Cobra - top marks! History! Well, slightly. But I can cope with that. I thought, if I have to stay here for three bloody hours, I

can

do it. Except then - and it's dark in this exhibition, and the space is tight, and no

Text	message	from:
Russell		one knows what the hell is going
on - I have a genuine, proper, rare panic attack. You'll		

Sent:	29-Oct-2008
23:57	never have seen me like that. It
hardly ever happens to me these days. It happens to me	

Back at the hotel. Exhausted. But we actually did it! The

conditions in my head that I can repeat to calm myself

Imagine one of our book signings, but with no control, no order, no queue, no down... but like I said, I've never been in that situation before, with everyone talking atable, no system, no one in charge, no Post-Its, no pens, no space, just people, people, me, looking at me, and photographing me, so nothing was working. Eventually - andpeople. It was a nightmare. It just wouldn't stop. As it started to get worse, people this goes on for a solid ten minutes, an endless ten minutes - I realise that I'm trappedfrom BBC Branding and Worldwide tried to stop it and turn people away, except there into signing anything that's offered, so the solution is to stop people even seeing me,

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which means cutting off the procession at the corner. I'm hissing, 'Stop them! That The stupid thing is, it's my fault, but the repercussions are reaching Brandgatecorner! STOP THEM COMING ROUND THE F*****G CORNER!!!' Some teenage proportions (well, not quite), because BBC Worldwide is mortified by it all, like it wasgirl said, 'You shouldn't swear,' and she's lucky I didn't f** '**g punch her. their fault, and they're sending e-mails today that say:

The Branding and Worldwide people wade in, and stop the whole exhibition. And *We would like to apologise deeply. We feel there are some significant learnings and* get out. I walk out of the shopping centre -- still being chased by kids and families *points for review in terms of the event and press management. I just wanted to let you--* and I'm ice cold with sweat by now, feeling ridiculous, still shaking. Oh God. Stood *know that I am on the case and will be feeding back thoughts to you more fully once*in the cold. I smoked five cigarettes in a row. Calmed down. Even then, I'm ashamed, *I've had the chance to consult with a few people this end.*because the Branding and Worldwide people won't leave me alone. They're still dancing It's an investigation! Bloody BBC. I'm trying to say, 'No, it was a mistake, it's me, notattendance, so I have to explain myself -- 'I have a problem with crowds' -- knowing you! Argh, just leave it alone!' It's so bonkers.that will be all around the office in the morning, like I'm some bloody nutjob. I'd never You're right, an NTA e-mail will cheer me up. I will write that. It'll be fun. Buttell them that normally. Oh, Christ knows what they'll say about me tomorrow. Sod thank you for that last e-mail. Noel and I had a lovely chat about you at the NTAs'em. -- he really does love you, that big, tough fella. He said the loveliest things. I said you

Anyway. There we go. But then it got funny. I still had a job to do. I had to do were a bastard, of course.

press interviews. The first one was with a 10-year-old girl, a reporter for First News or P.S. Talking of bonkers, Torchwood was out in the wilds of the Brecon Beacons on something, 'The world's only primary-school newspaper!' Her name was Talia. She Wednesday night, and it snowed on them! In October! Huge nightmare. was from Hampstead. Being 10, she wrote out all my answers in longhand. 'When...

David... de... .cided... to... leave...! Christ almighty.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER 2008 16:46:14 GMT

Phew. So, that was a night and a half.

RE: OPERATION COBRA

We're
on Richard & Judy tonight, but I can't watch it. I don't get Watch. I want to hear
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER 2008
10:53:06 GMT what you said, because I couldn't make out a word from
where I was, imprisoned in there: **OPERATION**
COBRA 'Star Bar' bit of
the studio. Christ, that was weird. (Still, free drinks -- can't complain.) Yesterday sounds
horrible. I'm really sorry that happened. Especially after the euphoria Everything about
that day was odd. of Wednesday night. I never knew that about you and crowds. I can't
imagine it, to

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 31 OCTOBER 2008
19:08:20 GMT be honest. I don't mean I don't believe you; it's just that... well, you're so
confident,
and loud, and bright in public, it's hard to imagine you panicking like that. All
those **RE: OPERATION COBRA** people swamping you -- and once you've signed an
autograph for one kid, you can't I can't get Watch either. I've only got a plain
Freeview here in Cardiff. Damn. I wanted to turn anyone down, can you? -- sounds dreadful for
anyone, under any circumstances. to see Rufus Hound calling you 'an attractive
man' during your interview. I was let alone... hmm. If you want to write about something
happier, tell me about hooting! Oh God, it'll probably cut to me hooting. Never
hoot in public. And
then Wednesday. he
showed you his tattoos! 4 Rufus was lovely, actually, wasn't he? It was weird, though.

I was
sat there with Matt Dawson, discussing a pumpkin with David Tennant's face

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 31
OCTOBER 2008 16:34:13 GMT

carved
into it. Bizarre. Maybe Freeview's limitations are a good thing.

Anyhow.
The NTAs. It's funny looking back, because I can see, with hindsight, how

RE: OPERATION COBRA

It's ironic, because I suspect that I'm good with crowds. It's only an unexpected
crowd much the hype had hyped us up. Of course David was going to win, and of course
it

that throws me. It's a weird little glitch in my head. Most days, it doesn't bother me.
If would go without a hitch. But we'd all made the day so potent - so sort of symbolic.

it's a speech, or the NTAs, or even a Tone Meeting, I'm ready. It's not like I spend
the We've known for ages that David is leaving, we knew that it'd be announced some
day,

day before meditating or anything, but I know that it's coming, and there's a little

tic we knew that they're already looking for an Eleventh Doctor, and yet the whole thing at the back of my head preparing me. But when it comes out of the blue, then bloody seemed so massive. So important. Maybe it was more about us. Then again, it was hell. Sometimes, I think, the older you get, the more your defences crumble. After all 4

The show's 'comedian in residence' Rufus Hound interviewed Benjamin in the 'Star Bar' - then, off camera, flashed him the

these years, for me to have a night like that again makes me think, oh, here it comes, tattoo, on his left upper-arm, of monkeys fighting robots, including a Dalek. Meanwhile, Russell and his fellow guests (retired

rugby player Matt Dawson, and actor and impressionist Kevin Bishop) had to pass comment on a Doctor M/fto-themed Pumpkin-

it's not gone, it only waited. sculpting challenge. It was that kind of day.

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certainly important for Doctor Who. Perhaps we're so tuned in to protecting the show a torch for David Tennant?' -- and my mind was whizzing at a thousand miles an hour that there's precious little difference between it and us these days. Still, I love waking hour, thinking, do I use my Richard/Doctor clause or will that make them ask whenup on days like Wednesday, when you're awake immediately and your first thought is, he's leaving? I wittered. And then we judged a man who'd carved David's face into aoh my God, big day! Julie is the same. We're adrenalin junkies. The worst thing is, I pumpkin. And one of the fanboys from the 'Star Bar' asked me how the timeline ofwoke up really feeling bad about Richard and Judy, like I was seriously compromising Harriet Jones's three terms in power could have been altered. My mind was swingingthem. Professionally, it felt so wrong -- and personally, too, because I've been on their all over the place! It's no wonder I went a bit mental on Thursday night. And then Ishow lots of times, and they're always so nice to me. I did feel bad about it. I still do. emerged into the corridor to find Rufus Hound showing you his tattoos of famousI've written to the producers since to explain. robots fighting famous monkeys. I can't leave you alone for a second! That was the

On the train to London, Operation Cobra was going mental. Julie phoned up to say funniest and strangest thing I'd seen in ages. (Has he turned up at your house yet? I bet

that they'd got David's video interview ready to upload onto the website, and they'd he doesn't show those tattoos to everyone.)

added the Christmas Special trail at the end. I said, 'Which trail? The Journey's End Before I knew it, I was at the hotel. Same old crap, same old panic, there's never

trail? Because that's the right one, just ten seconds long. Not the Comic-Con trail?' enough time. I'm ironing a shirt, and texting Julie, and you, and Phil, and the taxi is

(The one that was shown at Comic-Con in San Diego is 50 seconds long, way too due, and I'm late. I'd be on time if I were just going to the awards, but no, of course,

much material, shots that we're holding back for December.) 'No,' said Julie, 'they there's the pre-drinks, the sodding pre-drinks, the bane of my life, the bloody pre-

won't have put on the wrong trail. I'll go and check.' She phones back: 'They've put on drinks with everyone. I'm going to have that carved on my gravestone: 'Killed by pre-

the wrong trail.' Bollocks. 'What do you want me to do?' she asks. 'Can you change drinks.' Why can't we just turn up? And I'm really, seriously believing that David hasn't

it?' I say. 'The tapes have been sent out,' she tells me. 'We'll have to call them back.' won, because there's been no word. I was really sour for a good 20 minutes. All those

"Then call them back! Now!" Then I get to London, get in the cab, calm down, phone plans! All that excitement! What a waste of time. Now we'll have to tell everyone he's

her back: 'Hold on, the Comic-Con trail is great. Let's release it.' 'I've called all the leaving in some flat, poxy press release. And I'm feeling clumsy, and old, and stupid,

tapes back now.' 'Send them out again.' Do you see, just jitters, jitters, jitters? We were getting into my clothes, having come all this way for nothing. And I forgot to bring

going loony. black shoes, so I'm wearing Doc Martens, which look ridiculous with all that posh

By the time you arrived at the Cactus studios, Ben, I was outside in their smoking nonsense... and then Julie rings... and WE'VE WON, and I LOVE this night, and

bit, 'The Garden' (it's an alley, with tables), on the phone to Julie, both of us trying to my DMs look BRILLIANT, and I AM ONE SEXY BASTARD!!! Even the pre-drinks

work out a Richard & Judy line. In the end, we worked out an escape clause: if Richard turned out to be okay. Steven was there, too. I said to him that the night felt like a real,

or Judy started to say, 'What about David?' or 'How long is he -' then I'd leap in with proper handover, from me to him. That was part of the Cobra plan. Everything we said

did had to move on from David, onto Series Five, onto new, new, new. Exactly

'I think you'd make a good Doctor, Richard!' - in the hope that it would send him off

Protect the programme.

on an All G-type riff, and the starting point would be forgotten. 5 I had three or four trigger sentences like that, all stored in my head. All useless, probably. You rarely get to But then it descended into chaos, like it always does. Catherine wanted me to walk

use those planned sentences. Anyway, when you were in make-up, I left quite

quickly in with her, so she wouldn't be on her own on the red carpet, but she was late, and then

car got lost and couldn't find the carpet -- and Julie was on the phone to Torchwood, because I went to tell Ed from Ebury the full story. He blanched: 'Oh my God!' I was

were stuck with children in the Brecon Beacons, and it was snowing, so they were going, 'You can't tell anyone!' (Why did I tell him, then? I'm still not sure. I think I

to cancel the whole shoot, with no way of rescheduling it. You should see Julie was just so wound up that I needed to say it out loud. And I trust him completely.

times like that, standing on the red carpet, photographers all around, with fanboys I thought he should be part of it, in case any trouble blew up afterwards, so he'd be the crowds shouting 'Julie! Julie!' at her, while she's on her mobile sorting out ready.)

with my mobile in her other ear, literally, at the same time as she's guiding

Like I said, it was all hype and jitter about nothing, because while you were missing

in. But really, by this stage, it's a laugh. It's a complete bloody big laugh, it all in the 'Star Bar' - that mad, mad bar area of the studio - Richard and Judy

we're all signing autographs, and Dannii Minogue sweeps past, and Simon Cowell were being lovely and kind. They skirted close when Richard said something about

-- the cheers, my God! -- and GMTV asks if Catherine is coming back, to which Judy fancying David -- 'How many women do you know who, like my wife, carry

say, 'No, I'm done with her. She's old news!' See, with crowds like this, I'm fine. Well,

5 Famously, Richard Madeley once dressed up as comedian Sacha Baron Cohen's alter ego All G on ITV breakfast show
This I'd known for weeks that this would happen, and I'd been there before. Easy.

Morning, which Madeley presented with Judy Finnigan from 1998 to 2001.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
NINETEEN: THE COBRA'S TALE			

Throughout it all, we're counting down. Julie is Head of Cobra. She's getting they had Briefing #15? Am I wrong?! I end up thinking, they said, 'Do Not Get In Themessages and muttering, 'The camera's in place at Stratford. The link's working.' Even Lift,' but is this the lift they meant? Maybe this is the First Lift. We won't get in thethen, it had to be complicated: what if the live link breaks down? David has pre- Second Lift. If there's another lift after this, I definitely won't get in it.recorded his stage-door speech, just in case. (I wonder what happened to that tape. So, we get in the lift. The NTA woman presses the button for the second floor. "That'sNice DVD extra.) Oh, but what if Hamlet starts late? Julie is grim and powerless. If an the Press Area,' I say. 'I thought we weren't meant to be getting in a lift.' But I say itentire coach-load of the audience has been delayed, the RSC will delay the start of the quietly, so no one actually hears me. We arrive on the second floor, and the lift doorsplay, because that's more important to them than our camera. Very true, but... yikes! open... and standing there is the Head of BBC Publicity, and the Doctor Who PR team,Even then, new Cobra briefings are being passed down from on high. The Head of looking at us like we're idiot children. They have arms outstretched, trying to stop theBBC Publicity has said that under no circumstances must we suggest Russell Brand as tide. 'Didn't we say, "Do Not Get In The Lift"?' 'Oh,' I say, 'this lift?' 'What lift didthe next Doctor. No. Way. Well, that tempts me. I'm dying to say it now. But Julie is you think we meant?' 'There might have been another lift.' 'No, it's this lift.' 'Oh. Wedeadly serious: 'Do not say anything that connects Doctor Who to that unholy mess.' shouldn't have got in, should we?' 'No.' We press the button and go back down. We'reShe's right. Not funny. hooting.

Lis says, 'I enjoyed my trip in the lift.' When we get back out at the bottom, the

The Albert Hall is packed with everyone that you've ever seen on telly ever. Times like people with clipboards and earpieces are staring at us. 'Why've you come back down?'

that, I realise that I'm a thousand years old, and have been in TV for too long, because I they say. 'No idea,' I reply. 'It's mad up there.'

know so many people. The real-life Bob who inspired Bob &Rose is there, and his wife. And then, finally, we get to the whole point of the evening: David Tennant wins

And Annabelle Apsion, who's the mum in Shameless, begs me for a part in Doctor Who. Outstanding Drama Performance! But this was the most surprising thing of all, because

'It's the reason I became an actor!' And while I'm by the Shameless seats, Sean Gilder I looked up at this huge screen looming over the Albert Hall, and THERE'S DAVID!

says hello. Ahh, lovely man. The Sycorax Leader! Killed by a satsuma! They're bizarre, It really hit me. I was so delighted to see him. I can't explain how powerful that moment

those events, because everyone starts talking to everyone. It's sort of communal. I had was. It wasn't the announcement to come; it was just seeing him, because I realised,

a lovely chat with Arlene Phillips, who can't have known who the hell I was. But there in that second, that I hadn't seen him for ages and ages, and we spend so much time

are far too many A Gays there, all coiffed and groomed - Jason Gardiner from Dancing thinking about him, and talking about him, and about the Tenth Doctor, and the sight

on Ice, that man from EastEnders, Craig Revel Horwood - and I'm thinking, they're all of him on that screen, even though it had been planned for months, was astonishing.

so smart and I'm wearing bloody Doc Martens. How embarrassing. I was really gobsmacked. There was something about his face, too, because he looked

Anyway, the ceremony starts. We're live on ITV! Even then, the work doesn't stop. kind of raw, and open, and emotional. Or maybe I'm projecting that onto him. Maybe

Julie is five seats away from me, so she's texting: 'Should all the cast go up on stage that's how I felt. It was bizarre being so close to him, yet so far away, all of us sharing

if we win Most Popular Drama?' I text back: 'No, the NTAs asked for only me and the same thoughts, but not really knowing what each other is thinking. It was so

Catherine.' Julie: 'I know, but it would be so nice.' Me: 'That's true. Let's do it.' So, strange, but the strongest feeling. Maybe all my predictions about how unemotional

whispers go along the line to Camille, Noel, and Lis - change of plan, pay attention! I'm going to be when I leave this show are wrong. Maybe I'm going to be a sobbing

Also, Cobra Briefing #15 from the PR people was: if Doctor Who wins Most Popular mess. Then again, maybe there will never be a moment as focused as that -- certainly

Drama, and you go backstage after collecting the award, don't get in the lift, because not one as public. Maybe that was it! Gaping at a big screen. Very appropriate.

that takes you to the Press Area on the second floor, where they take photos and ask So, David said his stuff -- and I've watched it back since, and it

seems perfectly

questions, and you haven't got time for that. Come straight back to your seat, to be normal, but at the time it was like his pauses were endless. Time in slow-motion.

ready for David. Got that? Do. Not. Get. In. The. Lift. Okay? So, we win - and I kiss Agonising! We all thought it - me, Jane, Julie, Phil, we all said afterwards, 'I thought

the Duchess of York, ha ha.⁶ And then we're taken backstage. I'm thinking, Do Not he wasn't going to say it!' But the best bits were the moans and groans of dismay that

Get In The Lift. But we're being led towards the lift. I'm thinking, I'm sure we're not went around the Albert Hall. I'd been worried that the audience wouldn't really listen.

meant to go in here...? But people with earpieces and clipboards are herding us, and It s noisy at the NTAs, full of people screaming and yelling. A lot of that is filtered

they seem to know what they're doing, so we become dumbos, like sheep. Catherine, out by microphones on TV, but on the spot it's a box of noise. I actually thought that

Lis, Noel and Camille are all chattering away, and they don't object to the lift. Surely David's words could be missed. But no. The dismay! That felt wonderful. That's when

all started looking at each other, with the biggest grins. Perfect! It worked.

then work took over, and it was off to the second floor. (I got in the lift.)

6 Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York, presented the 2008 National Television Award for Most Popular Drama.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

The press asked questions - 'Are you shocked by David's announcement?' - and it all dissolved into nonsense. And then the party afterwards, where the man who plays Niall in Holiyoaks was gorgeous and failed to ask me out, and I met Paul O'Grady, and Lee McQueen, and that nice man from The Bill who was once a Cyberman.⁷ But I couldn't be bothered. I just wanted to leave. So I did. Back to the hotel. It was the same hotel I was in on the night that we announced Chris Eccleston's casting as the Doctor, when I stayed up late to watch it break on the news channels - and here I was again, watching BBC News 24 talking about David's departure. Funny little coincidence.

It took me ages and ages to unwind. I pottered about till about 4am. But it did me good. That announcement unlocked some stuff in my head. At one point, I was lying on the bed, fully clothed, and the whole Rose thing suddenly made sense. I've been massively worried about how to include her at the end of 4.18, when the Doctor revisits all his old companions. How can you see her, when she's stuck in a parallel universe? I'd thought of cutting to her and Doctor #2, the blue-suit Doctor, in their parallel world, sort of realising that the original Doctor is dying, feeling it somehow... but what are they doing? Building another TARDIS? Living with Jackie and Pete? Travelling the wilds? Should Rose have a baby? Whichever way you look at it, that's an odd scene, and distracting. But on Wednesday night, I realised how to do it... and I'm not telling you, ha ha ha! I really don't want to write it down. I need to save it.

On the train back to Cardiff on Thursday morning, I described the scene to Julie. She sat back in her seat. She was silent. I thought, she doesn't like it. Then I realised... she was crying. She actually burst into tears. I'll take that as a good sign. When I got back here, I sat at the computer and all sorts of 4.18 scenes poured into my head. That brave little spaceship proves to be the key. I haven't told you about the head of panic building up about 4.18 - well, to some extent, I don't want to repeat myself. If I'm building up to a script, then I'm terrified, take it as read. Thursday afternoon, though, I had a rare moment of looking at the whole of 4.18, and thinking: I can do this. It's going to be good. Yes, I can write it. Very rare. Like a powerful rush of warmth towards the episode. I don't think I've ever felt that in all of this Great Correspondence. I really do think Wednesday night released all of that - partly because of the relief, and partly the fear of living up to people's expectations.

Operation Cobra might have been mental, but I think it did me good.

⁷ Niall Rafferty, played by Barry Sloane, is a character in Channel 4 soap Holiyoaks. Graham Cole, best known as PC Tony

Stamp in ITV police drama The Bill, appeared in various episodes of Doctor Who in the early 1980s, often uncredited, including as a Cyberman.

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CHAPTER TWENTY

SMOKEY THE SPACE PELICAN

In which Gallifrey is resurrected,
Russell remembers his childhood,
and the 456 has a gas at Upper Boat

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2008 08:16:22 GMT

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

BARACK OBAMA WINS!!! U - S - A!!! U - S - A!!! I think I
might move there too

now. It looks great. A Brave New World. A lot like the old
world, but with one less

idiot in power. I woke up to the news. I was going to stay
up to follow the results,

but I was too shattered. Wasn't Obama's first speech as
President-Elect fantastic?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2008 11:55:20 GMT

RE: THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

O - BA - MA!!!

OMG! ETC.

You have, literally, woken up to a Brave New World.
Oh, it's exciting. History! This

is so wonderful. Also, on the news, they're saying that
they can clone mammoths.

It's the future they promised us, with jetpacks and
monorails. My silver jumpsuit is

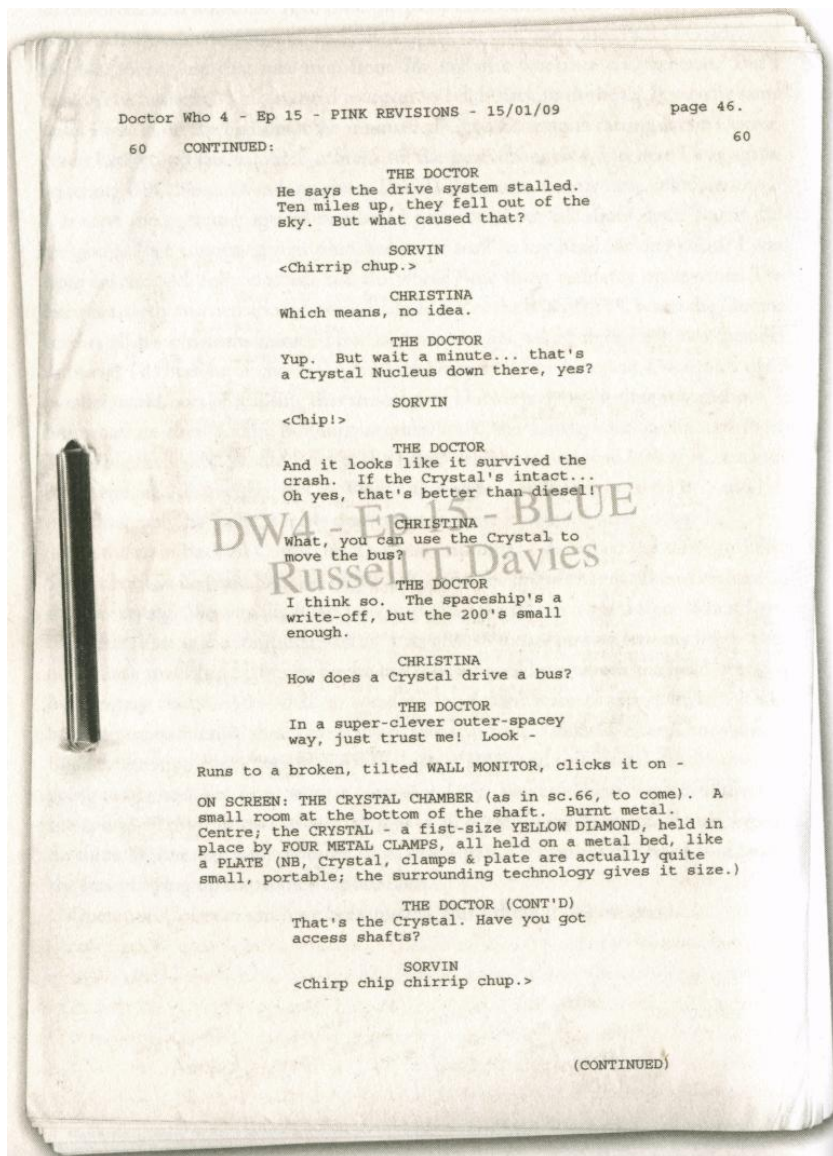
looking good. Mind you, just to be pessimistic (it's
hardwired into me), this will send

out a wave of change that will sweep across this country
and let in the bloody Tories.

Bollocks. I know, I'll move to America! Ha ha. Yes, it's all

about me.

Anyway, yes, what a speech. Mind you, John McCain's concession speech was



gracious and dignified. Okay, that's enough, sympathy over. It was actually a bit

boring, staying up to watch the coverage, because Obama

had obviously won, but the

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S	CHAPTER
TALE				
TWENTY: SMOKEY THE SPACE PELICAN				

networks didn't dare say so until bloody 4am. But then, oh, the cheering in Chicago. it better. But I love that. A pelican! Torchwood versus the Space Pelican! Amazing. Apparently, exactly 40 years ago, JFK said that in 40 years' time there could

FROM:
 RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2008 16:11:56 GMTbe a black man in the White House.

In other news, I've had a very good couple of days. Gareth's latest draft is excellent. **RE: COUP DE THEATRE**He's a good lad. I'm so happy. I wanted a great big, funny, mad old romp, just before it We're hitting money problems. It was always going to be hard to raise the cash for theall turns dark for Christmas - and that's exactly what we've got. A jewel thief, a double- *Doctor Who Specials, on the simple basis of fewer sales, lower returns -- plus, there's no*decker bus, giant flies, swarms, a psychic old woman, and UNIT! Gareth has never 13-episode pot of money to amortise the costs -- but now, of course, along comes thewritten a script that's so joined-up before. It's a real whole. Less work for me, too. (Just worldwide recession. International sales for the show are down, which is usual after aas I finally get a co-credit! That's making me laugh.) big expansion, but people are buying less, naturally. Canada bailed out before Series

Four,
 and now we've lost Japan, too. This means that BBC Worldwide has less money
 Oh God. I've read it. I've started. I'm back on Doctor Who.

to
 give us. DVD sales are down too, across the board, for everyone. Interestingly, when
 Worldwide's
 money is low, usually they go to 2Entertain (who publish the DVDs) forFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES
 TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER 2008 23:50:42 GMT

more
 cash, and 2Entertain go to Woolworths... but they've been sending out very**RE: THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER**

big
 signals recently saying that Woolworths might be going bust! Can you believe it?I'm off to London tomorrow. I've agreed to appear on Charlie Brooker's Screenwipe,

Woolworths!
 (Sell those shares!) It's haemorrhaging all over the place. This is truly thebecause he's doing a Special about writers. Apparently, it's inspired by -- wait for it

recession
 in action.- our book! Yes, really. He couldn't put it down, I'm told. Unless they're saying that to

Do
 you remember what I said about how Julie has to balance all this? Yesterday, shelure me.

Every single writer asked is turning up. I think everyone's too scared to say

and I had a very tough conversation about our options. We've got to be prepared to talk to Charlie Brooker.

concede, and compromise, and shift strategies, for the good of the show. Two things

And then, on Friday, it's the Great Correspondence On Stage! At the National! Oh,

might happen: firstly, we might have to reduce the final two-parter to two standard-

and are you coming to Cardiff for this Children in Need thing at the weekend? It's

length 45-minute episodes; alternatively, we might have to drop an episode altogether,

the Upper Boat Open Day. Have I told you about that? Guided tours of Upper Boat which we both agreed would be Phil Ford's pre-Christmas story. (Poor Graeme Harper - winners via a competition phone line, to raise money for charity - with your tour He's directing that episode. Poor Phil, too.) This is still worst-case scenario. It might guide being Julie, me, Johnny B and Eve Myles! It's barmy. I've no idea what it entails. not happen. But neither is it nonsense. It really might happen. At the same time, I'm I haven't had a script, or a timetable, or anything. sending out warning flares, saying that 4.17/4.18 is expensive. Julie and Jane are both

saying that we'll find the money. 'Keep going, and stay ambitious!' That's why I can

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 10 NOVEMBER 2008 17:48:19 GMT

never complain about any budget issues, because we really are so supported by the

COUP

THEATRE

always have been.

DE

BBC, and

I'm in Manchester. It's probably the last time I'll get back here until Christmas. I love this office of mine. I'm having a lazy day today, and then I'll panic for the rest of the

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2008 16:51:07 GMT

week. (Can you believe we were on stage at the National on Friday? That's so mad.

I **RE: COUP DE THEATRE**

loved it, though. I thought it was really good.) »we might have to drop an episode altogether«

The Children in Need thing was mad, but lovely. You could just tell that BBC bean-Surely BBC Worldwide want more output, not less?

counters were lurking, calculating how much money they would make if they opened

up a tour full-time. A fortune, I reckon. But why not? People were genuinely delighted

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2008 17:01:24 GMT

to be standing on the real TARDIS, where David Tennant has stood. Best part was, the

RE: COUP DE THEATRE

punters got taken onto a huge, new Torchwood set, the government chamber where the

Yes, but for some reason -- which, frankly, I don't understand (you're having this relayed

alien 456 ambassador - the aliens are called 'the 456' - is revealed in a tank full of gas, to you by a financial idiot) -- Worldwide's input would remain constant, even if we did

and some kid says, 'It's a pelican!!!' In fairness to Neill Gorton, it wasn't anywhere near three episodes instead of four, thereby making three more affordable.

complete. They're not actually filming it until Thursday. They've got a good few days to wire up the animatronics, and then cover it with blood and gunk and stuff, to make

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
 TWENTY: SMOKEY THE SPACE PELICAN
 FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2008 17:05:21
 GMT working this afternoon, and BT needs me to test every bloody socket and
 handset,RE: **COUP** **DE**
THEATRE blah, blah,
 blah. I hate BT.I don't really understand that logic.

How's life in the
 Maybe? FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES
 TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2008 00:03:24 GMT

RE:
COUP DE THEATREFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 13 NOVEMBER 2008 17:30:31
 GMT Back to 4.17/4.18... The millionaire character is expanding nicely.
 Anthony Hopkins.RE: **COUP** **DE**
THEATRE Or Julie
 Andrews. I can fill that character with vigour. Some characters just feel alive,»I don't
 really understand that logic.« and
 he or she is one of them. I can sort of feel him/her bristling across the screen,

No, me neither, but I've had to put a clock on it, because 4.17/4.18 plans
 are earning his place in the story, because he/she's a plot machine. In a good
 way! I keepadvancing in my head. If they're to be whittled down to 45 minutes, I need to
 know veering between options -- does he want this Immortality Gate for
 himself, or for hisnow. Julie has promised a decision by next week -- which might not be
 possible, but children? Or even grandchildren, if he's old enough? There's
 something marvellouslysoon, anyway. She's so magnificent at forcing through money (on
 Sarah Jane Series selfless about a man who's doing it for his children. But
 thinking about the millionaireThree, for example, the problems have almost disappeared), so
 we're proceeding as -- who should be a billionaire, really -- I keep
 coming back to... Switzerland? Geneva?!normal, for now. Imagine, though, what
 Julie goes through every single day, juggling Why do I imagine that he lives
 abroad? How weird to have a pivotal Doctor Who storyall these sums -- and doing so without
 ever getting bored, without ever losing her set in the Alps. I invented that when
 I had the Real Hustle Master stealing a passportpassion for these shows. She's amazing. I've
 never worked with better. Never. and leaving the country, just because that
 looked so smart and clever, but now the

Back in the Maybe (isn't it so much warmer and more fun than the real
 world?)... Master is a shuddering cadaver, so I don't need that old plot any
 more.To leap straight in, the biggest dilemma is still Donna. It's Catherine. The
 temptation Yes, Doctor Who is at its best in England. It should be a stately home,
 with a hugeto use her, to make her a big part of that Master story and not just a cameo. I
 can't sci-fi lab built right into the heart of it - all those consoles and computers set
 againstget that out of my head. I've spoken about it to Julie, and we've both had the

same big French windows, sweeping curtains, busts on plinths, oil paintings and things.reaction: ooh, the temptation! But tempered with the same caution: she can't get her Nice contrast. Ed would do that brilliantly. The Christmas scheduling decision ismemory back. So, how do I do that? I got far down a long line of plot, which was informing this, too. A millionaire. The millionaire's kids. Grandchildren. Christmas.rather good... the Doctor has taken refuge in that battered old spaceship, with the Stately home. Big tree. Feels good. It's time to bring the story back home. Sod the Alps!Runny People and Wilf, and he flies down and rescues Donna. But once rescued, she's Why the hell did I wander off there?frantic - spaceships! Runny People! Memories! - so lovely old Wilf has to anesthetise Then, after my last e-mail, I had a brainwave. A BLOODY GREAT BRAINWAVE! Allher or something, just knock her out, while the Doctor is frantically trying to think along, I've been persecuted by the problem, what does the Master want? He transplantsof a way to bring all this to an end, in case it kills her. All of which still has to dovetail himself into every human, but that's just the first episode. He can't spend the entirewith Donna getting her happy ending with the wedding, somehow. But on and on and second episode hunting for the Doctor. He has to have a plan, a universal scheme, likeon it went, in my head... in Last of the Time Lords, but not too much like Last of the Time Lords. I've done power,

Until yesterday. I was brushing my teeth, and I thought very clearly: no. One word, war, spaceships, etc. But then, this evening, I was sitting here at the computer and I

like that. A sign went up in my head: wrong way. Initially, I'd thought of having thought... GALLIFREY! He wants to restore Gallifrey!!! That's nice, because it tempts

Donna only in the background, so... trust your instincts. That's how it should stay. the Doctor, too. The Master won't succeed, of course, but we'll get a few fleeting seconds

This plot is about the Doctor and the Master. Donna is a bystander. Maybe she'll turn of it, glimpses of the planet. Oh, the temptation. (Oh, the budget.)

into the Master, along with every other human. Wilf can even be on the phone to her I know where it came from. Nothing comes out of thin air. Ages ago - well, a

at the time. That's nice and scary. And that's that. good few weeks ago - Julie sat down opposite me and said, out of the blue, with real

Good. Phew. That's been weeks and weeks of thought. It hasn't helped seeing longing in her voice, 'D'you know what I want in the finale? Gallifrey. Can we go to

Catherine at the NTAs and stuff, because I so want to write more for her, but that's the Gallifrey?' Which completely took me by surprise. That's the last thing I was expecting

wrong instinct. I have decided. It really was like a big, sudden, unbidden 'NO' in my head. I've never had that before. I rather liked it. It makes life easier. I had a Gallifrey sequence, with Murray's score, and those images from The Sound of

I'll sign off for a bit now -- more to report soon -- because my landline stopped. *Drums where we glimpse the Doctor's home world in a flashback, and she said, 'It's*

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
TWENTY: SMOKEY THE SPACE PELICAN

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2008 02:03:24 GMTso powerful. It means so much. It's the Doctor, and his home, and his longing, and

his whole mythology.' And I said no. Immediately. Partly because that's often my first **RE: COUP DE THEATRE**instinct - it's selfish, like saying, 'Get off my turP.' - and partly because I thought that You like that story? Oh, good. The moment I read your e-mail, I went downstairs toGallifrey would be just too expensive, all hallways, and arches, and cardinals, and make a cup of tea, and all sorts of Gallifrey stuff came into my head. It became real! Iechoes, and chambers. 'Every single shot would be an FX shot,' I said. 'We couldn't do hadn't thought about seeing Time Lords, or hearing them, but now... hmm, maybe.it.' 'Oh,' she said sadly, and that was that. But I was listening. The fanboy part of my (Fleetingly!) Oh, that's good. Phew. Right. Gallifrey it is. (Maybe not the Time Tots. Imind was saying, 'No, no, no,' because it's burdened with too much continuity, etc. won't mention them. Though I might give them to CBeebies as an animated series!)However, Julie isn't full of Doctor Who lore. She wasn't being fan-ish. What she actually

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2008 21:23:34 GMTwanted was that myth, that temptation, that call of home.

Today I thought, what if the Master can pull Gallifrey out of the Time War (with **RE: COUP DE THEATRE**

a handy bit of un-timelocking) by replacing it with Earth? A planet-swap. Earth gets I woke up this morning and thought: the Gallifrey idea is shit. I really did. My heart

thrown into the last seconds of the Time War, to die a horrible death, and Gallifrey was in my boots. Gallifrey seems so backward-looking. Restoring it almost seems like

replaces it in the solar system. The Time Lords live! Except, the Master has this Master-fan fiction. (Then again, so does the Daleks meeting the Cybermen, and I made that

body-projection thing now, so all the Time Lords can become him. Why would he be work.) Also, I'm thinking, how?! How does the Master planet-swap? The Master turns

happy becoming just the human race? He'd want to be every Time Lord! Of course, the himself into every human being, and then what? He finds a convenient, long-buried

Doctor would arrive in time to stop him throwing the switch. No, in fact, he'd arrive
Gallifrey Restoration switch? Buried at Stonehenge or something?
That's handy! He's

stuck
on Earth, and he rules the planet, but how the hell does he shift into an almighty
just after the switch had been thrown. Out of those windows -- those French
windows

planet-
swapper? I'm haunted, again, by the ghost of Last of the Time Lords, in which
-- an old, familiar breeze blows in. That scent. Snow in the air. The
Doctor and the

I
played every beat of a Master story possible. In that story, he had the TARDIS. It
Master look out, and the fields beyond the house, the fields of Earth, are fading
away,

would
be wonderful if he had the TARDIS again here, because I could believe that it
the orange mountains are appearing, those mountains of High Endeavour or
whatever

could
be converted into an almighty planet-swapping device. But I've done it. Also,
I called them in The Sound of Drums, with the Time Lord Capitol gleaming on
the

to
get really ming-mongy, if the Master can find a way to restore Gallifrey, why didn't
horizon. Gallifrey restored! The Doctor in awe! And then the Doctor blows up
the

he
do that last time? He ruled the Earth for an entire year, but fuffed about with
whole shebang. Everything reverts back to Earth. Hooray. But that simple
moment

Toclafane.
Why wasn't he aiming at Gallifrey then? Why?!

of him standing with the Master and seeing Gallifrey, breathing it in, tempted,
so

This
is weird, because I was flushed with excitement about it last night. Maybe I'm
tempted to allow it to survive... that's worth a million quid. That scene sells it to
me.

having

some sort of adrenalin comedown today. Gallifrey gives me something that

That's what Julie meant. Not the planet, but the legend.

really

links the Master and the Doctor - unites them even, beautifully so, just for that

Julie phoned tonight, about something or other, and I was so excited, I said, 'I've

one

scene. That's rich, that's powerful, that's good... except I've woken up not liking

found a way to do it! You're getting Gallifrey!' She was ridiculously excited, too. But

it.

Mind you, Steven sent another e-mail today, just to say how much he really likes

then I thought, for all I know, that's what Steven is planning to do in Series Five. I fired

it.

He's never done that before, so I should listen to him. (Unless he's out to sabotage

off an e-mail, and he replied almost straight away. 'No, fine, have it.' He said he loves me. Yes, that will be it. He's setting up Series Five as the cure for all ills, the bastard.)

it. He thinks it's a brilliant way to end David's tenure.

I'll just have to keep on thinking about it. To Gallifrey or not to Gallifrey? I suppose

it

does tie up the last four years quite nicely, in which the Time War, and the Doctor's

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 14 NOVEMBER 20 08 00:35:46 GMT

loss

and loneliness, have been so central -- stuff that Steven is, naturally, going to want

RE:

COUP

DE

THEATRE

to move on

from, I suspect, because it's about time we did, so it's the last chance to

Gallifrey is exciting! Julie is right. She was responding as someone who loves the play that story.

Doctor, the man, his life, and his history, not as a raging fangirl. But can we see some On a much more trivial level, I keep wondering what to call the final episode. I've

more Time Lords, please? Can we, can we, can we? Thanks. (Seriously, can we?) It's not used up so many classic apocalyptic titles - The End of the

World, Doomsday, Journey's

fan-ish any more, Gallifrey, is it? It's all wrapped up in the Doctor, and his loneliness, *End... what's left? The Final Reckoning! Maybe The Final Battle. That's okay. Hang on,*

and the Time War -- and like ten million people know the ins and outs of that.
TEN no, it isn't. 'Battle' is a shit word. Death of the Doctor? Hmm. No.

MILLION! (Probably more, let's face it.) We're all fans now.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

Oh, but I'm so terrifyingly late already. I should have started on Gareth's rewrite ages

ago. Hell, I should have finished Gareth's rewrite by now. I should be onto Phil's. But

I'm building myself up. Psyching myself. But there's an extra element this time, a funny

sort of reluctance nagging at me now, because actually, for the first time ever on this

job, the end is in sight. In a couple of months' time, I will have finished Doctor Who.

That feels like a very significant stage in my life. But it's having a detrimental effect,

because there's a big part of me that doesn't want to finish. Not just for sentimental

reasons, though they are strong -- I love this job, and the people -- but also because

the future beyond Doctor Who is an empty void. I imagine myself sat in some stark

Hollywood flat, bored to tears in American meetings... and coming home. In fact, I

went to Tesco's on Tuesday night, and walking there I absolutely convinced myself that

I shouldn't go to America -- that I should stay in Manchester, lock myself away in my

office, and write, just like the old days. I was so convinced that I had this apologetic e-

mail to Jane and Julie all written out in my head. Word for word. It was a fact. I felt

good. I had changed my mind. I was staying here. But then I came home, and forgot

all about it. Like you do.

I spent a lot of the day pottering about here in this house, running through the stuff

that needs fixing, in my head, in 4.15 and 4.16. It's comparatively little with 4.15.

For example, I'm not sure the information about Christina's life is seeded correctly

throughout the episode. I'm not sure that she and the Doctor reveal themselves to each other in quite the right order yet - or with enough style and fun. This is more

than fixing dialogue. It's kind of the spine of the whole thing. So, I'm working on

that,

if only in random thoughts. With 4.16, we're waiting to see if The Mill can realise

Water People as CGI, with complete 3D models - because that will affect the episode

substantially, if it's beyond the software. It's looking possible, right now. Will Cohen

has sent me some water-software adverts that were beautiful, but he needs to go and

do tests. That will take him a fortnight or so.

But while I sit here, regretting not-writing, one little detail can bring me to a grinding

halt. Right at the start of 4.15, there's a problem that I can't get around: Christina the

jewel thief is robbing that vault, she lowers herself down from the roof towards that

precious goblet thing, and it's surrounded by laser beams, which she lowers herself

through... but that's where I halt. She lowers herself through the beams? Well, they're

rubbish beams, then, aren't they? That doesn't work. She has to find a better way around

the lasers, and yet this is just a pre-titles sequence. It's meant to whizz by. Maximum

speed. There's no time for too much intricacy. So, what does she do? I swear, that single

thing is stopping me. You know I have to work on things in order, and that's Page 1!

I've various fixes that I could drop into later scenes, no problem, but I simply cannot

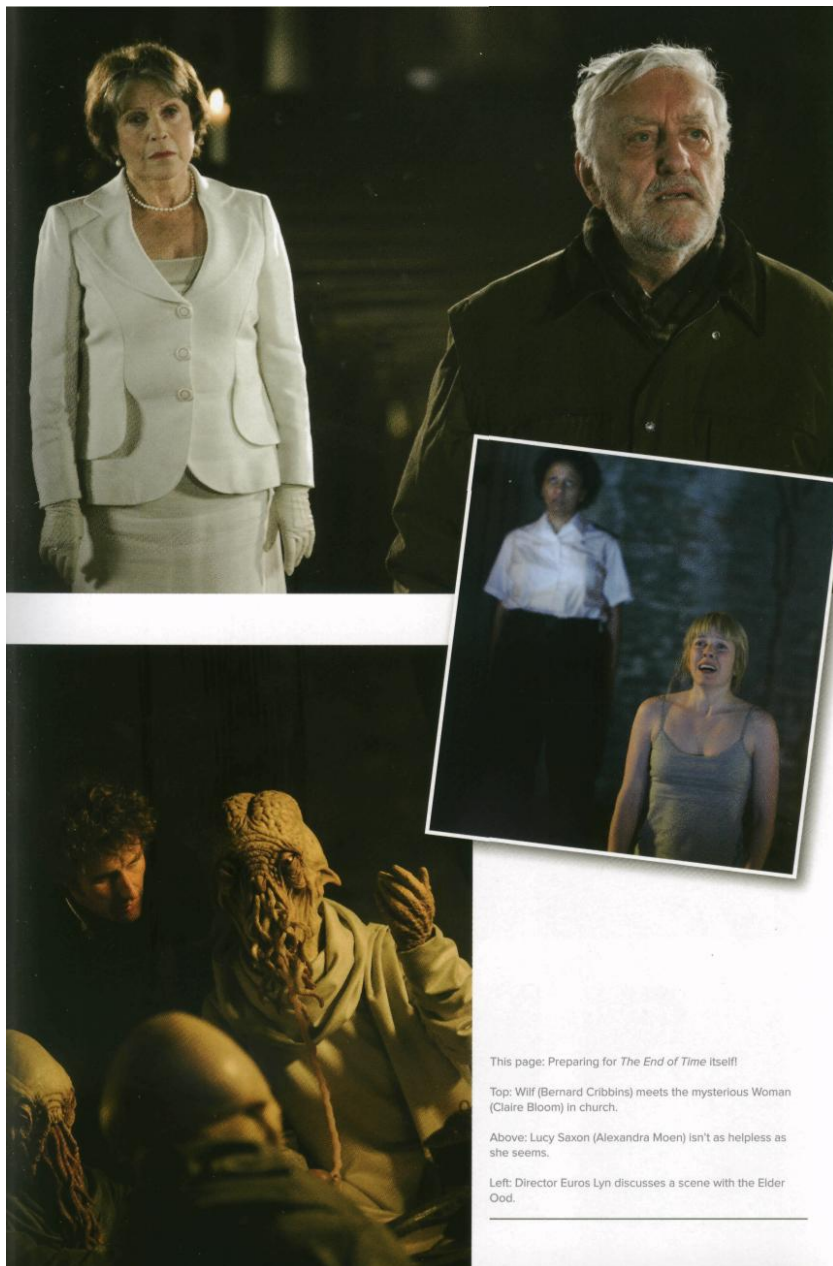
do it till Page 1 is working. Every day that passes, I'm losing time.

One other thing happened today: I've been asked to write the Foreword for the 30th

anniversary publication of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. I am so honoured. That

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This page: Preparing for *The End of Time* itself!

Top: Wilf (Bernard Cribbins) meets the mysterious Woman (Claire Bloom) in church.

Above: Lucy Saxon (Alexandra Moen) isn't as helpless as she seems.

Left: Director Euros Lyn discusses a scene with the Elder Ood.

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This spread: The many faces of the Master (John Simm).

Above: A prisoner of Naismith.

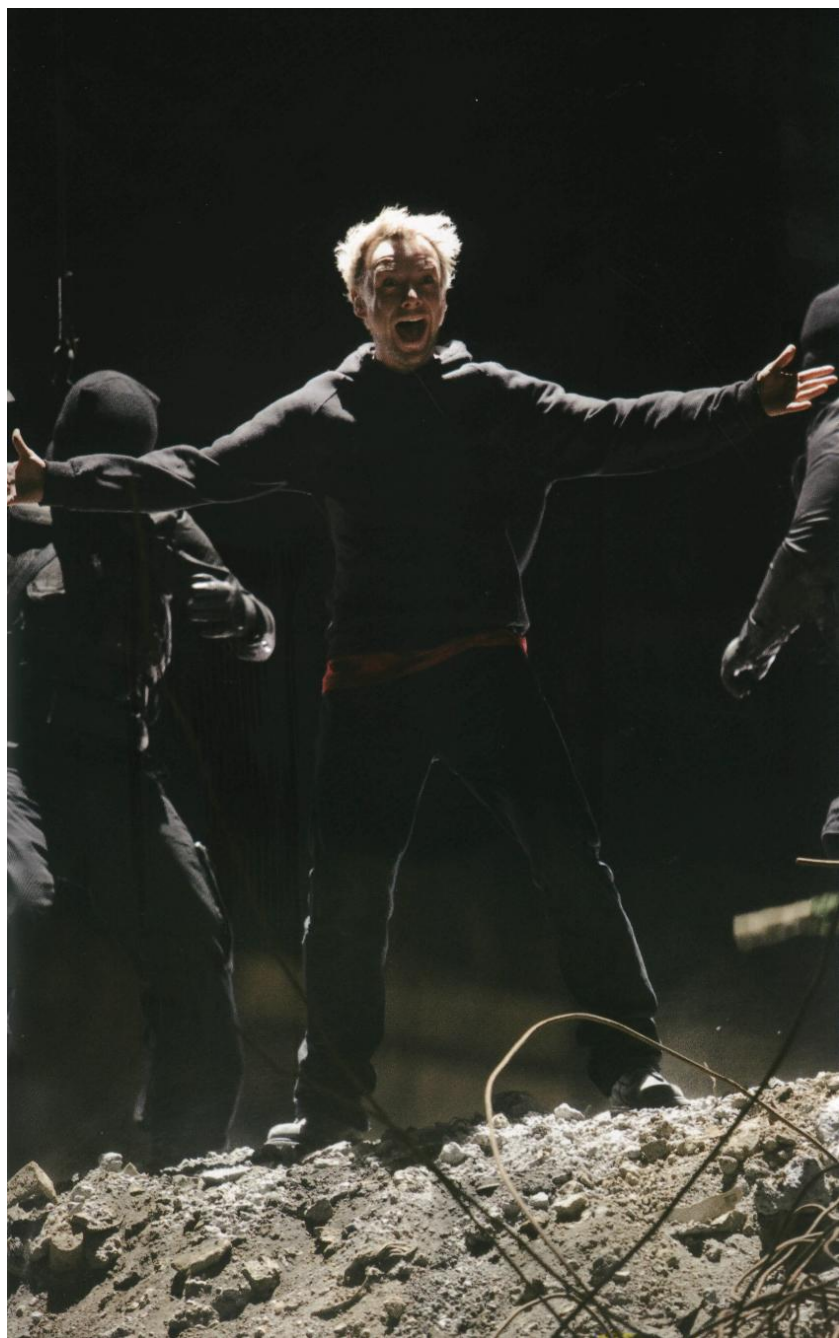
Left: Markers on John Simm's face help with his CGI transformation into the skeletal Master.

Below: The Master becomes a Chinese army officer, newsreader Trinity Wells and a UNIT General.

Facing page: The Master is captured by Naismith's troops.

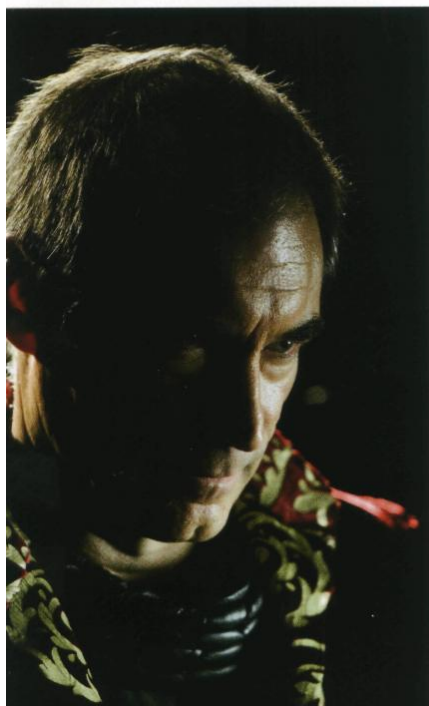


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Above: The Time Lords make their triumphant return.

Left: Timothy Dalton as Rassilon, Lord President of Gallifrey.

Below: Green-screen filming for the massed ranks of Time Lords seen in *The End of Time*.



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Above: These innocuous-looking booths in Naismith's mansion will cost the Doctor dearly...

Right: Addams (Sinead Keenan) in her Vinvocci form.

Below: Abigail (Tracy Ifeachor) and Joshua Naismith (David Harewood) toast their success.



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Facing page left: The Doctor faces a final, terrible choice...

This page: The Doctor finally gets his reward.

Above: Verity Newman (Jessica Hynes) meets the man who broke her great grandmother's heart.

Above right: The Doctor does a spot of match-making between Captain Jack (John Barrowman) and Alonso Frame (Russell Tovey).

Right centre: Newlyweds Martha Jones (Freema Agyeman) and Mickey Smith (Noel Clarke) hear a familiar sound for the last time.

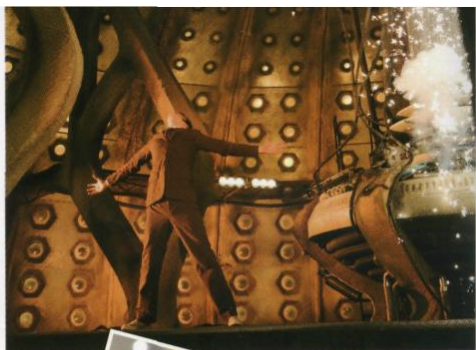
Right: It's second time lucky for Donna Noble (Catherine Tate).

Below: A final – and first – meeting for the Doctor and Rose (Billie Piper).



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Above: The dying moments of David Tennant's Tenth Doctor...

Right: ... and the first moments of Matt Smith's Eleventh Doctor.

Below: The two Doctors!



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CHAPTER TWENTY: SMOKEY THE SPACE PELICAN

book, of all books. When I was 16, that book was as cool as punk rock, and drugs, and sex, it really was. Everyone carried it around with them at school. In a plain old Swansea comprehensive. And now I'm writing the Foreword! I can't believe they've asked me.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2008 02:55:37 GMT

CARDIFF I'm back in Cardiff, starting to root through 4.15. The script attached to this e-mail is Gareth's, but I'm writing inside it, so the asterisked sections are my changes. But he's written his best script so far, so I'm mostly just tidying up and clarifying.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2008 03:01:29 GMT

RE: CARDIFF You're still up? Of course you are. Thanks for the script. It's a really mad old romp.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2008 02:36:50 GMT

RE: CARDIFF Here's some more 4.15 script.

Meanwhile, in Upper Boat, they're filming Torchwood versus Smokey the Space Pelican. We focus on that creature for three whole episodes, and it's so obscured by smoke that we're all wondering if it's going to work - a very uncertain feeling, creeping through the production team, while Peter Capaldi has to act with glass and smoke. (Which he's doing brilliantly. The man is amazing.) I've been wondering if we can enhance the alien with extra swirly CGI or something. I had a long conversation with Julie about that this afternoon. All I can suggest is ripping some of the CG out of, say, Doctor Who 4.16, and spending that on Torchwood. Not that cash is that easily transferable, but... it is when Julie is in charge. Hey ho. Sci-fi fun.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2008 02:08:01 GMT

RE: CARDIFF More script. I'm really getting into the swing of it today. It feels good and proper - and fun! - to be sitting here writing Doctor Who. And today we saw an edit of Smokey the Space Pelican, which ain't too bad after all. The smoke really makes you stare. So! Good all round.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008 01:25:47 GMT

SWANSEA AND BACK I'm too tired to write tonight. Strange old day. I was in Swansea for the funeral of one of my mum and dad's old friends. Lovely Myra Blyth. One of the best. She was 86, sat down in a chair, went to sleep, never woke up. Nice way to go. I have to go to one or

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TWENTY: SMOKEY THE SPACE PELICANDOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

were
hacked down, one by one. With no dignity. These vivid, grand people end up two of these
funerals a year. They're dropping like flies. My mum and dad had a real

felled,
and it simply doesn't stop - cancer, strokes, Alzheimer's. My mother had an gang of mates. All
their adult lives, a proper gang, 20 or 30 of them, 40 maybe, I've

aggressive
blood cancer for two years, and never told anyone, not a living soul. She hid never counted,
with each of those people expanding over the years into family trees of

it
ferociously and brilliantly, until the week before she died, because she didn't want to sons,
daughters, grandkids, who all became part of the gang, too. They used to traipse

be one
of these walking wounded. Some of the women used to go for lunch together, in and out of
our house, usually pissed, and I mean very pissed. Great drinkers, all

every
Wednesday, every single Wednesday, for decades, a regular gang of 15... and of them. The
backdoor would open, any time of day, and one of them would stride

now
there's five of them left. Just five. But those five are still smiling, still hooting, still in, usually
with some outrageous story (often filthy), told with the skills of a true

drinking
gin and tonic, now telling stories of their broken hips, dead husbands, and storyteller, with
punch lines, riffs, and crescendos. Loud, wild, barmy characters, all

children
living on the other side of the world. Such an extraordinary gang, woven into ferociously
Welsh. This entire community was based around Swansea Rugby Club.

each
other's lives, and now each other's deaths. They all turn up at the funerals, still Their entire
lives satellited around that place, all day, every day. It was their world.

bristling
with news, and gossip, and anecdotes. Faithful to the last. It still is. These funeral wakes are
always held in the Rugby Club. Sometimes I think

Good
old Myra. Went in her sleep. One of the few who got it right. And we all sat that's where mine
will be. It'll just be automatic.

in
church, and listened to the vicar telling us, with all his heart, that she's with her

What a ferocious social life it was. Way beyond anything else I've seen in my life.

husband
now, and 'whosoever shall believe in me shall have eternal life', and you just

The men were all just out of War. They all went off to fight at 16, just kids. The Rugby

think,
no wonder we make this stuff up. It's so needed. It must be wonderful, to be a Club still lists
all the names of the boys who were blasted to bits. Billy Williams, who

Christian died
at 16, swimming in burning oil. Never forgotten. My father had to hose down

And I
said I didn't want to write! I just wanted to write something else for once. boats of refugees to
stop them entering the harbour, because no one wanted them. But

those Swansea men fought, they drank, they had sex... and then they returned home,

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008 01:45:34 GMT still kids, and had to go
back to living with their mothers. No wonder they escaped to

RE:
SWANSEA AND BACK the Rugby Club. They're way beyond sports fans; they lived for that
place, and for each

I can
see why richly defined characters -- and bright, sharp dialogue -- are such anchors other.
Truly, the most ferocious and loyal friends hips. My dad was there, always. The

of your
scripts. The sorts of people who populate your writing were there, in your front only time you
could guarantee him being in the house was Christmas Day, when he'd

room,
as you lay in bed and listened to them singing downstairs. sit there burning in a silent
hangover, then he'd go to bed at five in the afternoon. On

Can I
ask -- if you don't mind me asking (I don't wanna be intrusive) -- what was Boxing Day, the
rugby started again, and off he went. And they weren't just spectators:

your
mother like? I've never really asked you about her before. You talk about your so many of the
men went on to play for Wales, while the women became rugby wives,

dad
sometimes, because he's still alive, you visit him and that... but your mum, not so the powers
behind the thrones. Kingsley Amis was a lecturer in Swansea, and wrote a

much.
What kind of mum was she? Which aspects of her do you see in yourself? book about that
crowd, The Old Devils, which won the Booker Prize. BBC Two

dramatised it a few years ago, and people would phone me up saying, 'That's your

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008 02:31:01 GMT mum and dad! They've
dramatised your mum and dad! This was a drama with hairy

RE:
SWANSEA AND BACK old men pissing in gardens at midnight, while the women drank so
much gin and

never mind the 'intrusive'... Although it is hard to give an answer - what is a person tonic that they'd fall over and sleep in their clothes.

Ah, like?
They're an infinite number of things. There's that marvellous Stephen King quote, where
I loved that crowd. Every Friday and Saturday night, they'd all pile in from the
he says that the most layered, complex, fascinating fictional character is nothing
Rugby Club, at two in the morning -- plenty of booze in our house -- all off their heads, but a
bag of bones compared to a real person. My mum is hard to describe without
yelling, and bawling, and hooting, and singing, singing like you'd think the Welsh making
her sound like Mother Of A Gay Man. Shame on me for even worrying about
didn't, really. I used to lie in bed and listen, and think it was marvellous. When I was that.
But she was immensely strong and clever. Like so many women, the glue that holds
very young, I didn't even know if these people were uncles and aunts or whatever; they a
family together. (I remember standing in the hospital, an hour after she died, and my
were literally like an extended family. Even now, at that wake today, I'm not actually
sister
saying, 'How are we all going to stay in touch with each other now?') But I loved
sure who's whose son or cousin or wife. They're just one great big gang.
her. I
loved seeing her. I really miss seeing her.

But Christ, old age. Old age is savage. It's brutal. If you'd taken a snapshot of them
We
weren't close in the ways that you'd expect us to be close. We wouldn't have long,
just ten years ago, they'd all be wrinkled, smiling, hearty and pissed. But then they

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intimate conversations, but I never felt that we needed to, because I'm like her in many aisles, just chatting away, buying stuff for my sister... when this really polite, kind, ways, sort of private and self-contained. We could both talk, and talk, and talk all day, elderly man walked up and said, out of the blue, 'Excuse me, I hope you don't mind without giving too much away. She was quite private, I think, and liked being private. my saying this, but you're bleeding.' And her arm was covered in blood. There was She had lots of friends - those great Rugby Club friends, those powerful, exotic, larger-than-life figures - but for all that, at the same time, I think there was a whole secret there was nothing wrong with her. Really bizarre. Where's all that blood from?! She life, going on in her head. I like that. I don't spend any time wondering what she was ran to the toilets, to clean herself up, and I got the staff to clean the floor. And when doing, what she was thinking, or wishing that I'd known more. I'm just glad she was she came back, there it was -- the tiniest pinprick on her thumb. The sort of cut you like that, because I'm like that. When I describe her as strong, I don't mean that she get in picking up, I don't know, some bit of shopping, like the smallest of paper cuts.

Literally, a pinprick. As small as that. But because she was on some sort of blood-was domineering or loud; she wasn't at all. But her presence was strong. I think that's

thinning drugs, that tiny little incision bled, and bled, and bled. And then we just what I mean when I say how much I liked simply seeing her. She was like a still centre.

carried on, she kept on chatting and shopping, but she was mortified. Everything she didn't need to shout, or nag, or intervene. She'd just potter about in the kitchen

been keeping secret was suddenly visible, bright red, in public. So, she took me to the -- all day, every day in the kitchen - while the whole family revolved around her,

train station. We had one of those daft little family traditions without her needing to even try.

- the traditions that you don't even think about, you just do -- where whenever one of

She was an only child. Maybe that helps you to live in your head, I don't know.

us gets on a train, the other stands on the platform and waves it off. Even if you have to When she was very young, they were as poor as anything, living out on the Gower

wait ten minutes before the bloody thing moves, stuck there in a dumb show. It's just ain a tiny cottage. It'd be worth a fortune now. That's where the rich people live. My

Davies

thing. I got on that train, and she was on the platform, and I must have spent 20grandmother would clean houses and pubs, and even make tea in the garden for

seconds

turning away, putting my luggage on the rack or whatever, and when I turnedpassers-by, to make money -- while my grandad was a bit of a mystery. He'd disappear

back...

she was gone. Impossible! Honestly, impossible. We just don't do that. I went toabroad. He joined the American army, took cargo boats to Jamaica, and all sorts of

the

window, looked up and down, and there was no sign of her. She must have actuallystrange, wanderlust things. When he was home, he'd take my mum to the edge of the

had

to run to get out of sight in time. And that's when I really knew how ill she was. Shecliffs, and dangle her over the edge by her legs so that she could collect plover's eggs

must

have thought that would be the last time she'd ever see me. And she was right. I sawfrom the nests, because they could be sold for good money. My nan used to scream at

her

in hospital, when she was dying, just a couple of weeks later, but she was insensiblehim, "You've been dangling that child again!" Then, when my mum was -- I don't know

by

then. Bloody hell, I hate that image, an old woman running down a station platform-- seven or eight, she spilt a pan of hot chip-fat down herself, had terrible burns, so the

- so

she didn't have to look at me, or I didn't have to look at her.whole family had to move into town so that she could be closer to the hospital for years

Ah,

you see, you ask about my mum, and I talk about her death. Because it's stillof grafts. That's when we became a Swansea family instead of country folk. No wonder

incredible

to me. They always say that you get over these things, and only remembershe was strong. No wonder she was so self-contained. What a thing to go through.

the

happy times. Well, maybe not. It's eight years ago now, and I can't exactly say that I

It was all summed up by the way she died, really, when she had cancer and lived with

smile

whenever I think about her. I still think: she's dead. I still think it's wrong. Out of

it for two years without telling anyone. The strength of that! No one in my family has

thousands

of years of great literature, novels, poetry, essays, diatribes and philosophy,

ever felt hurt or betrayed by that, by her silence - which is remarkable because, when

the

Death Of Your Mother seems to be quite a small theme. It should be massive. I
a parent dies, you go through all those wild and contradictory reactions. But we never
can't
work out if it's too huge, or too ordinary.
regretted her decision, none of us, or blamed her, because we all knew what she was
That's
cheered me up. You bastard! Ha ha. No, it hasn't made me miserable. Not
like. She kept herself to herself, even when surrounded by family and friends.
really.
I'm glad you asked, even though I don't think I've really answered. I just told a
Well, hmm, there's one time when I wish she'd said a bit more, or that /# said a bit
good
story instead. Because that's what I do.
more. Towards the end, I'd worked out that she was ill (long story, I'd type for ever),
and I went to see her, to ask her. She admitted it, though didn't say how ill she really

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008
02:40:56 GMT

was. (It was a blood cancer, so it was very invisible). We'd talked -- really calmly, really
RE:
SWANSEA AND BACK
ordinary stuff, while watching TV and flicking through newspapers, because real life
Have
you ever written her, do you think? Because your scripts are full of strong women,
is so un-dramatic, most of the time, no tears, no angst and stuff-- and then she drove
clever
women, you write mums so well - Hazel in Queer as Folk, Monica in Bob &
me to the station, but we stopped off in Tesco's on the way, and pottered about in the

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TWENTY: SMOKEY THE SPACE PELICAN DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

Rose, Jackie in Doctor Who -- and your mum sounds very like them in some respects, always a fevered attraction towards boys, so I really can't remember when I first applied but quite unlike them in others. And what did your mum make of your chosen career? the word 'gay' to myself. It never felt wrong, I never hated it, but I knew that I should. Did she approve? Oh, but she must have! She must have been so incredibly proud. keep quiet about it... not in a tortured way; it was just automatic. That was what I did,

naturally.

I envy those 15-year-old boys and girls nowadays who can come out of the

closet.

Like life is so much better now...? But I wonder. They have more choice than FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008 03:04:19 GMT

I

ever thought I had, but maybe that causes more angst. To announce myself simply RE: SWANSEA AND BACK

didn't

exist as an option for me, or for any gay boy or girl of my age, and I'm not saying I'm sure she was proud of me. It's a shame that she never saw this big, popular success

that's

good - theoretically, morally, it's absolutely wrong -- but to live that life, not that's Doctor Who. All she saw was the Queer as Folk controversy, which can't have been

saying

anything...? Yeah, I could do that. And I did. It just felt like waiting. easy for her. Mostly, she worried about my job, because 'writer', to my parents, sort of

I'm

sure I'm scratching the surface here - looking back into that young head is like equals 'bohemian' or 'unemployed'. It was only right at the end -- that last time I saw staring into a furnace - but really, in the end, it felt all right. I'm making it sound very her properly -- I told her how much I earned. She was staggered. Maybe that's why she calm, but I suppose I was helped because I found a safe space to live in: the youth ran away -- she was going to the bank! theatre company that I belonged to, which was wonderful. That, not school, was my

I don't think I've ever written my mum, though. I don't think I've ever written real life. Naturally so. It was a collection of brilliant, funny, clever people, in which

anyone directly. At the same time, I'm always writing everyone I know. I suppose there even the straightest of lads could camp it up. Very few were

overtly gay, though some

are echoes of her in Val Vivaldi, the mum in Mine All Mine -- always in the kitchen, older boys were. It was brilliant, I realise now, to see out gay men just a few years ahead

married to a difficult man, living a secret life -- but that still wasn't anywhere near her, of myself, and to know that there was a life to be led. Great place, great fun, great

really. I write strong mothers, but I write strong women full stop. Rose Tyler. Rose friendship. The most magnificent training ground, not just for theatre, but also for life.

Cooper. I sometimes wonder if I write women well because I'm not hampered by So much of my character was formed in that youth theatre. I don't think the staff who

fancying them. But perhaps that's bollocks. ran it will ever really know how marvellous they were, and how important.

I only told my parents that I was gay once I'd already left home. Even then, they

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008 03:20:06 GMT must have guessed. My dad - with the only observant thing he's ever said in his entire

RE: SWANSEA AND
BACK life - just said,
'You've always drawn men.' He was right. I used to draw constantly

Or maybe you just write everyone well, because you're a good writer. Just a thought. back then, all the time, like a compulsion, sketching and doodling all day long, and it

Since we're talking about your family and childhood, can I ask you something that was always handsome cartoon-y men, with strong jaws and big quiffs of hair. So, yeah,

you've been asked a hundred times before, I suspect... not by me, though... when did mum and dad were fine - not delighted, let's be honest, but they both loved me way

you come out as gay? In fact, when did you realise you were gay? Were your parents beyond any issue. But with a big, loud, fey, arty son, let's face it, it must have been

okay with it? What did the local community make of it? In Swansea. In the '70s. I've screaming at them. I know that my mum worried, because she associated 'gay' with

never asked you that

before. drugs and
promiscuity. I went on to write Queer as Folk, which didn't help! But we
didn't
talk about this stuff much. It's weird, isn't it, because you're essentially talking

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008 03:53:14
GMT about sex - well, it's far more than that, but that's the baseline - and
most parents don't

RE: SWANSEA AND
BACK talk to their kids
about that, whether gay or straight.

»Were your parents okay with
it?« I know what you mean
about Swansea in the '70s, but I think there's a lie told about

They still don't know. I've never told them. Ho
ho. small communities - whether that's rural
places, small towns, or closed groups -- that

When did I realise I was gay? I've never reached a satisfactory answer to that
question they claim that they 'don't know any homosexuals'. Look a little
deeper, and they

- I look back and I can't think of any one specific moment - because I suppose
I've do, and always have, for generations. There's always been funny old
Uncle Douglas,

always known, even before I had the right words for it. There was no choice. It
was who never got married; those two stern women who live together in
that old house;

always men. My first crushes were on boys. (Is anything in your adult life as
strong as someone's camp little son who doesn't like football. It's there, and
it's accepted, quietly,

those very first crushes? The burning madness of them! Does everything get
duller as tacitly. The moment that it becomes too overt, too sexual, too
challenging, then the

you get older?) I've no sense of ever going off girls, because I was never 'on'
them. Even headlines flare, the blood pumps, and the extreme reactions get
trotted out -- maybe

at nine or ten, when I probably didn't know what sex was or how it worked,
there was

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

because people are scared, because they simply haven't thought about it, or because

they love to strike an official stance, or because they're embarrassed by sex in any shape

or form. But when all that dies down, Uncle Douglas, and the two women, and Walter

the Softy, they're still there, and not driven out.

It's a funny subject, this one, because 'coming out' sounds so simple. As though it happens once. But I think I still come out in some shape or form, somehow, somewhere, to someone, almost every day. I'm always aware of it, a lurking 'does he

know?' Yes, even me. A friend of mine, who's my age and has had roughly the same

experiences as me, astonished me only a few years ago when he said, 'I think I need a

year off. I think I need to move house, or maybe just go away, so that I can come to

terms with it.' With what? 'Being gay.' That staggered me, because it sounds so true.

I'm really not sure what that means, and I'm certainly sure there's no magic answer to

it all, but something is ringing a bell there. It's never over... is it?

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2008 19:52:06 GMT

MORE 4.15

Great 4.15 Tone Meeting today! It's so good to be back. There's an energy about Doctor

Who that lifts everyone. I thought today, Steven and Piers are so lucky to be inheriting

this workforce. It solves half their problems before they've even started. The best part

of all was a big round of applause to welcome Tracie Simpson. The crew loves that

woman. Brilliant idea, promoting her. And she was fantastic. I'd wondered last night

whether she might seem nervous or daunted. Not a bit of it. She was as strong, and

as brilliant, and as fun as ever. In a short orange dress, and long leather boots. Since

we're filming in a desert, Tracie and Ed arrived wearing sheikhs' headgear! How funny.

Plus, we've a new accountant who's very handsome, and very tall, and possibly gay.

Unfortunately, he didn't laugh at any of my jokes. Ah, you can never laugh a man into

bed. Out of bed, yes...

Oh, and we're going to Dubai! That's our desert! The double-decker bus sets off in

December, because it will take five weeks to get there.

And then I came home, and watched the death of Ian to Jones on the rushes. Killed

by Smokey the Space Pelican. I cried! Like an idiot! I created that man. It's a bit of a

sentimental scene, but we can trim it down in the Edit. A good death, well told. I'm

really proud of that.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

In which Prince Charles apologises, octopus tattoos are

envisioned, and Matt Smith's name isn't mentioned once

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2008 01:38:23 GMT

RE: MORE 4.15

Ah, I'm too tired. I was going to stay up all night, but... zzzzz. And I have to write with

that balcony door open, or this place gets smoked like a kipper, so now I'm a block of

ice. It's freezing. But I've got to finish 4.15 tomorrow, or the whole week is wrecked. I

love Gareth's stuff, but it's turning into a bigger rewrite than I thought.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES ; SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2008 02:19:52 GMT

RE: MORE 4.15

I wonder if you're changing stuff just because you can. Do you ever worry about that?

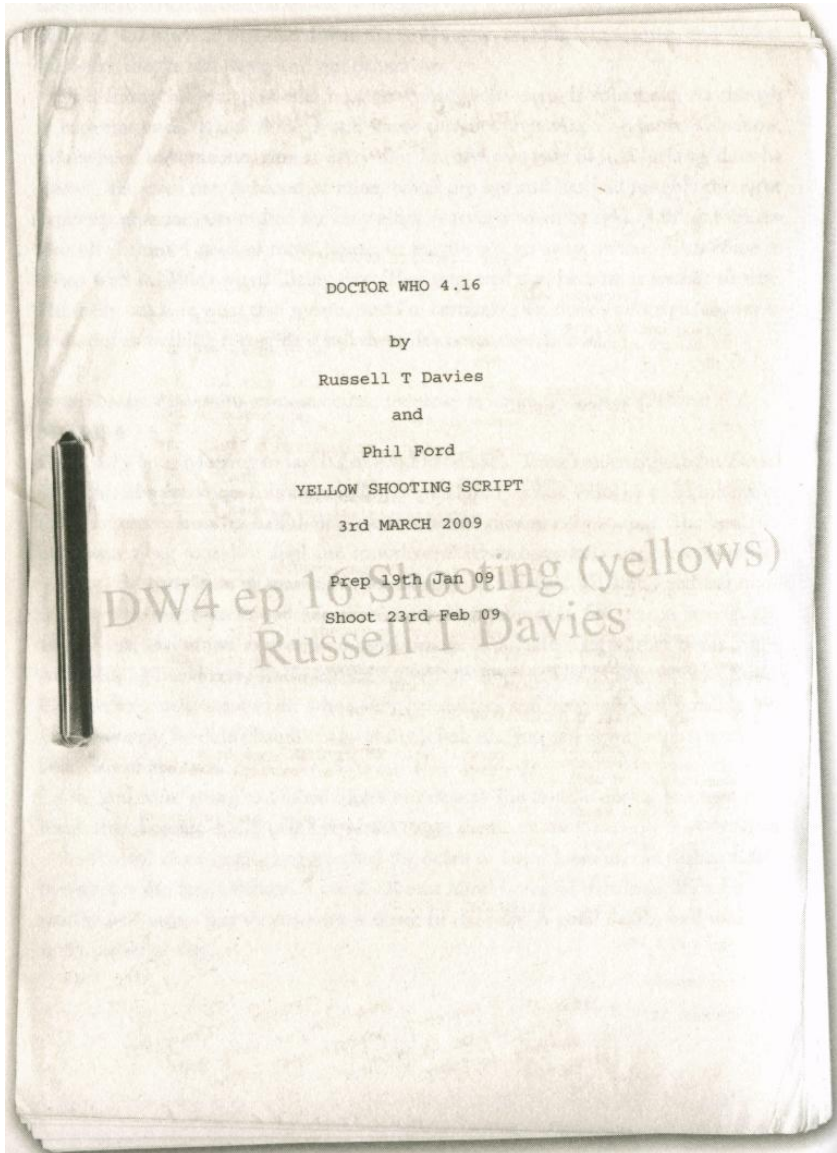
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2008 10:10:48 GMT

RE: MORE 4.15

That's probably true. No, it's very true. Then again, I read back my stuff and think it

works, so... God, they must call me a bastard. Imagine those writers sitting in the pub,

calling me everything under the sun. Oh well.



FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2008 18:02:53 GMT

RE: MORE 4.15

Ta-daaa! Pom-pom! I've finished 4.15! One script down. Three to go. (Or even two.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

We haven't decided whether to cut 4.16. Julie says that she's still lacking 300,000 know! Money is getting tighter. Goodbye Woolworths. Julie says that the financialfrom the budget.) I thought I'd finish yesterday, but it turns out that one episode of bite is terrifying. Doctor Who has more resources than most, but this is getting tough. *Torchwood is running under by five minutes, and they finish filming this week, so I had* It would still be easier for us to spread the money that we've got over three episodesto cook up five extra minutes of stuff. instead of four, but we haven't worked out all those costs yet. We don't know how

But now I can shut the balcony door for a bit. Thank God. much we'd lose by paying off Graeme, David, Nikki, all those people. Of course, there

ways of absorbing those costs. For example, David is dying to appear in an episodeFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2008 20:36:48

GMT of The Sarah Jane Adventures next year, so maybe Doctor Who money could cover that?RE: MORE 4.15

Anyway, no matter how much money you have to pay out for a cancellation,I'm watching Torchwood rushes - AND THERE'S NICK BRIGGS!!! The voice of nothing is as expensive as actually making an episode.the Daleks! On screen at last! He plays Rick Yates, the Deputy Prime Minister and In a funny way, this is all your fault. Yes, you, ha ha. Because 4.16 is suddenlyForeign Secretary. He is really, properly wonderful on screen. Huge presence. Utterly in a vulnerable position. Now that we've come up with the idea (your idea!) of thebelievable. Wonderful eyes. That man has really, really got it. I'm so pleased. And the Christmas regeneration (all right, spread into New Year's Day, but the point stillscenes that he's in are riveting. It's the government deciding how to cull ten per cent of stands), then, to be blunt, we don't need the Saturday-before-Christmas Special. TheBritain's children. Oh, it's good. I'm really excited. Good old Nick. 19th is kind of irrelevant now. The two-part finale will be huge, and will soak up all

In Specials Land, we've now got until the end of the week to decide whether to the publicity and viewers we need, so 4.16 is the last vestige of a plan that changed acut 4.16, because of course Julie has to talk to David about it and see how he feels. while ago. So, you did it. You knackered it. Ha ha ha.Though, there's still no sign of the missing 300,000. I'm wondering if there's a version Julie spoke to David today. She didn't quite stress the financial angle, because it's notof 4.16 that's very, very cheap, to save money that way. fair to worry him about that.

(Also, there is no one higher up at the BBC demanding

Still, the rest of my week is turning to shit. On Thursday, I'm in London to talk that we make this cut. It's entirely generated by Julie and me.) David's reaction was to the BBC Drama Writers Academy at Elstree. On Friday, I collect my OBE. (Oh as clever and canny as you'd expect. He was 'disappointed' at the thought of doing Lordy.) Saturday, the BAFTA Children's Doctor Who Day (I don't know what this is, three Specials, not four, but wise enough to know that the big finale is the thing to be but it involves Any Effects, which means something will explode).¹ Then, on Sunday, protected. He didn't throw his hands up in horror and say that we're doomed. Instead,

wondered if we'd throw away 4.16 on 19 December, and where else would it fit? the actual Children's BAFTAs, where I'm presenting a lifetime achievement award to

But that would put us up against The XFactor. the Chuckle Brothers.² Mental week. But annoying, because I should be working. Just

David had the stunning idea of Children in Need night - which we talked about think, if 4.16 is cut, I'll have to start writing the finale IMMEDIATELY!

ages, because it's tempting. Except, in the end, that's a charity night - which does FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 27 NOVEMBER 2008 01:14:17 GMT

well, with ratings exceeding Doctor Who's in places - and editorially we couldn't

interrupting a major fundraiser. Children in Need might love it, but we're both RE: MORE 4.15

doubtful. They want singing newsreaders. Imagine the pressure to include Pudsey, Julie said the funniest thing today. Someone from Branding told her that in order to

a plot in which children are in danger.³ Let alone the on-screen telephone numbers. gain admission to the BAFTA Children's Event on Saturday, she'd have to take a child

splitting the Special into ten-minute chunks. Or... oh God, you see? Hostage to with her. No adults are allowed in without a child. Not even her. Julie: 'Where am I

Potentially damaging. Anyway, it's wrong. We'd be parasites. I doubt that Jay going to get a child from? Do they think I've got one in my cellar?' That's been making

would sanction it. Possibly even asking her to sanction it would make Doctor me laugh all day.

a pain in the arse. Never let anyone on the Sixth Floor think of Doctor Who as a

No, I still don't know what the BAFTA Children's Event is.

in any context, ever. Rule Number One

But we spoke for an hour on the phone today, about this 4.16 wrangle. I think I'm

what do we do? Julie is going to Jane, because she's more of a final arbiter and writing to you because - well, I do anyway - but I want to lay it out, because I simply

a better grandstand perspective. She can help us see the wood for the trees, and don't know what I think. I always have an opinion. Always! But this time... I just don't

metaphors. But we've got to decide soon, because I should start writing 4.16 - or

Any Effects provide physical effects for Doctor Who, Torchwood and The Sarah Jane Adventures.

2 The Chuckle Brothers are a comedy double act consisting of Barry and Paul Elliot, best known for their work on BBC children's show ChuckleVision, for which Russell wrote three episodes in the early 1990s. *Children in Need's mascot, Pudsey, is a yellow teddy bear with a bandage over one eye.*

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER

TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

- on Monday. (It won't be Monday. Did you guess?) Right now, the word that attracts Text message from: Russellme like a magnet is 'disappointed'. Bless David, he would be disappointed. Hardly Sent: 28-Nov-2008 13:26the strongest word in the world, but a heartfelt one. I never want to do anything On the news?! Oh no! He was talking about David as Hamlet, and that hethat disappoints David. (Rule Number Two! My personal rule.) So, that word alone was sorry he couldn't appear in Doctor Who last Christmas. How bloodyis enough to push me into action and go for four episodes. Add to that, how do mad. It was ridiculous and hilarious. Full report to come.we announce that we're cutting an episode without it saying 'BBC IN FINANCIAL

CRISIS'. Or is that good, to make public the fact that we're acting on a genuine FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2008 22:45:36 GMT

shortfall? Once upon a time, only the fans would have noticed or cared, but Doctor **PRINCE CHARLES' ARSE***Who attracts automatic headlines now, with the press gunning for the BBC in any way* How was the Mysterious BAFTA Children's Event? Did Julie get in? Did she find apossible. kid in the end? Where from?! My neighbour has several going spare, I think. I should

Hmpf. Typing it out didn't help. Well, maybe it'll sink into my head a bit, and I'll have mentioned this earlier.wake up tomorrow with a clearer idea - just like Charlie Brown's sister puts a French

book under her pillow in the hope that it'll sink in while she sleeps. 4 (Doesn't work.) FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2008 23:17:59 GMT

RE:

PRINCE CHARLES' ARSE

Text message from: Ben I'm back in Cardiff for a few scant hours. This morning was mental! The Mysterious

Sent: 27-Nov-2008 22:58 BAFTA Children's Event. I still don't know what it was for or why we did it, but it was

Good luck for tomorrow. Don't let them forget that the Doctor saved good fun. We had to get in at 7am to rehearse, and the show was at 10.30am, so we Buckingham Palace last

Christmas. barely knew what was happening. I thought I'd be on stage for ten minutes. I was on

for an hour-and-a-half! But it was brilliant, and Kirsten O'Brien was a hoot, and 1,000

Text message from: Russell
kids screamed at the Cybermen and Daleks, so there we go. This show is truly mad at

Sent: 27-Nov-2008 23:02
times. I was on stage at the Barbican! First the National, now the Barbican!

Thank you! Oh, and Julie has raised all the money - all four Specials I'll give you a full Palace update when I'm back properly (off to London again are

on! tomorrow for the Children's BAFTAs), but even just a day later, it all seems very

strange and far away.

Text message from: Ben

Sent: 27-Nov-2008 23:06
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2008 15:05:03 GMT

Has Julie considered helping out Woolworths? She'd get them back on MY ANKLES' ARSE

their feet in no time. Yeah, my ankles. My ankles hurt. Ankles! I'm like a Jane Austen lady with weak ankles.

It's been like this for ten days. It's like I've got little coins of pain - like a hot 10p piece

Text message from: Russell
- in the side of both ankles. I feel like I'm about to fall over all the time. Since it's

Sent: 27-Nov-2008 23:07
both ankles simultaneously, that probably means it's arthritis or something. Oh God!

She's manning the pick 'n' mix as we speak. Ankles?!

Anyway! Proper update! When I last wrote in detail, 4.16 was teetering on the brink.

Text message from: Ben
Funnily enough, that e-mail

did do me some good. It unlocked the problems, and I lay

Sent:

28-

Nov-200813:17

awake

afterwards buzzing with ideas. I couldn't get to sleep, because suddenly it was as

I've just seen you on the news! At the Palace! Very smart. You were clear as day: we were all talking about 4.16 as expendable, so the answer is... make it

chatting to Prince Charles for ages. unmissable! Make it vital! Make it earn that Saturday-before-Christmas slot. It's hard

that with just a monster and a Mars Base, but there's a lovely little subplot ticking

in Phil's script: the Doctor knows that the Mars Base of 2050 is mysteriously away

and that it's (conveniently) one of those fixed-point-in-time things, so he4 Charlie Brown is the main protagonist in Charles M Schulz's Peanuts comic strip. destroyed,

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TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

should leave well alone and let them die. But he doesn't. Nice, okay. But that night, it always liked it, just clicked: that's not a subplot, it's the WHOLE PLOT!

Oh, and then the Palace. It was just weird. I woke up that morning in a stinking

There's a tiny key lurking in 4.15, where the Doctor says -- for the first time in temper. Really foul. I couldn't work out where it came from. Then I realised - that's twenty-first-century Doctor Who - that he stole the TARDIS. To new viewers, he must how much I hate not being in control. Being thrown into someone else's schedule, and seem best of mates with the Time Lords, all that rebel stuff has been put to one side someone else's protocols, for someone else's reasons, with a regime, and discipline...- and quite rightly, since I imagine that became irrelevant once the Time War broke oh God, I hated it. (My sister got told to put away her camera in the Palace, and I out. He was hardly going to carry on a personal grudge once the whole of creation wanted to punch the footman. We pay for that place!) But that's scary, realising how was at stake. No, he went back home and joined up, albeit in a maverick-y, Doctor-y much I like to be in charge. America will do me good. Cut that bastard down to size! Way, I'm sure. (Maybe I should write that Time War novel one day? I've got so much (Just don't hurt my ankles.) Poor Andrew had been in charge of the arrangements, and of it worked out in my head.) By bringing back that element, the rebel, suddenly he I was bloody unbearable.³ 'Where do we go? Where do we get the taxi to?' It just says becomes fascinating in a whole new way. All that stuff in The Fires of Pompeii about the Palace.' 'But which bit of the Palace? Have you seen Buckingham Palace? It's got not breaking the Laws of Time - suddenly in 4.16, for the first time, he realises: who hundreds of doors. It's got gates to the left, and gates to the right, and a gate in the says so? Why not?! The rebel, reborn! He's the only Time Lord left. He is the Laws of middle. Which gate do we go to?!' Turns out, it was the gate everyone else was going Time! He can do what he wants! It's like the grief is over, and he realises who he is now. through. Oh, I was wound up. But then we got inside, and it was all rather matey, it's not just a nice emotional, brave decision to save the Mars colonists; it's arrogance, everyone else feeling out of their depth, too. And then a footman fanboy'd me in their's the Doctor extending his powers... until the Ood calls him to his death at the end. cloakroom, so that made me laugh. He said, 'I'll get sacked for doing this, but can I pride, then a fall. have your autograph?!'

This feeds into this new format, the companionless Doctor. I've always believed All the OBEs got shoved in one room, MBEs in another, Dames and Sirs somewhere

what Donna says at the end of The Runaway Bride, that the Doctor is dangerous on else (I bet their room was posher). Anna Wintour was standing across the room, looking

his own, that he needs a human with him. I'd been vaguely worried that none of the truly, impossibly glamorous. There were soldiers, mayors, and posh people. I ended up

Specials was proving this, but here's my chance. (Always listen to those worries!) Also, with the dwarf. There was a dwarf called John, from Motherwell, in a wheelchair, and

it's what I wanted from that first notion of David's last episode, before it became a thought, I'll go and talk to him. Plus, I'm 6'6", so I thought it would look funny.

two-parter -- the story set on board the clapped-out spaceship, which was probably the And he was lovely. Dead tough Scotsman. He does charity work, and works for the

Tenth Doctor battling with his id, his dark side, his monstrous power. Now, we get the government and for disabled rights, and helps out with kids in amateur football, and

chance to play that on Mars! I'm thinking, I just write TV. I felt a fraud. But that's nothing new.

Oh, that was a good night. It was brilliant to feel everything click. For the first Then, we all head in - John abandoned his wheelchair, because he was determined to

time, I needed 4.16, to complete the Tenth Doctor's story. The next day, I got in the walk - and actually it's quite a laugh, because it's so relaxed. They do so many of these

car with Julie, going to Elstree, and described all this, and we were very excited. It's functions, it's the most well-oiled machine imaginable. With really friendly staff. Fair

become a trilogy,' she said. We were buzzing. So, then we went to Elstree, talked to dos to them, they were lovely. God help me, I'm becoming a royalist. You can see the

the Writers Academy, all very nice, then Julie had to head off early. ...15 minutes later, audience as you queue up, and my sisters look so funny in their hats! I was just laughing.

she phoned from the car. All the money problems solved! The cash is in! Thank God The Band of the Coldstream Guards plays music throughout the whole thing. When I

we went through that process with 4.16, because it's strengthened it hugely. Maybe went in, it was Greensleeves. So, you stand there, and bow - I thought I'd hate the bow,

that's always a good test for an episode: threaten to axe it, and then see how it adapts but what the hell, when in Rome - and Prince Charles was actually quite smiley and under

pressure. twinkly. Before you approach him, a Very Handsome Soldier whispers in his ear, telling

Everything else is going well. The recce in Dubai was wonderful, apparently. They

ve him who you are. Imagine him saying, 'Writes Doctor Who, sir.' Ha ha! So, he said how even taken plate shots, so you could say that shooting has begun. Sort of. The double-marvellous David Tennant was in Hamlet. (David texted later saying that Prince Charles decker bus is being kitted out with made-up adverts. I thought it would be nice to had actually sent him a long letter saying how marvellous he was.). Then he said that

tie it in with the finale somehow, and mention the millionaire's name, so the mobile he understood we'd asked him to appear in Doctor Who, that he'd only heard about it

phones on the bus adverts are made by 'Naismith'. Nice name. Yes, the millionaire is now called Naismith. That was the name of one of the villains in Century Falls. I've 5 Andrew Smith, Russell's boyfriend.

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TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

recently - oh God, I wonder if he heard the 'miserable bastard' bit - and that while he'd some more. That's annoying. After all this time, you still can't tell how long a script is love to, he just gets too many requests like that. And I said, 'Never mind that, are those going to be ears real?' Yes, I really did. And weirdly, tonight, Steven's Series Five, Episode 4 arrived in my inbox. Completely

And suddenly it's all over, it's photos outside, and it turns out the photographer's unexpected, unasked for. They seem to be thinking, you're showing us the Specials, so we'll assistant's daughter was in school with Lis Sladen's daughter. Only Doctor Who\ It will show you our scripts, too. How could I not read it? It's just spectacular. And terrifying! be there, somehow, for ever. And funny. And everything. Amazing stuff.

I was really knackered after that weekend. I've done barely anything all week, just

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER 2008 02:36:10 GMT rested my ankles. I'll have to panic and gibber from this weekend onwards, but that's

the deal -

RE: MY

ANKLES' ARSE

Stop

showing off. (Sob!)

Oh no, wait, I did have some grand thoughts this morning. It was actually making me laugh, by the end. Since Gallifrey is returning, I let myself get completely carried

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJ AMIN COOK. FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER 2008 18:45:02 GMT away, imagining a fanboy version of 4.17/4.18. I imagined starting there - Scene 1,

Gallifrey! Christmas Day, Gallifrey! The President hurrying through an ancient temple.

RE: MY ANKLES' ARSE Subtitle: "The last days of the Time War". Time

Lords gathering in cloisters, scared, I ran my latest Gallifrey idea past Julie today. She loved it. You bastards. You win! exhausted, under siege - explosions offstage, Daleks on their way, no one knows where BUT! I've shifted it to the top of the last episode. Honestly, trust me, opening on the Doctor is - and they convene to form some Grand Plan. (It turns out, in the Christmas Day, with Gallifrey at the top of 4.17, is wrong. But at the top of 4.18?)

Yes,

please! (Julie still hates those headdresses, though. I said that the guards in the end, that they have anticipated -- via some creepy Time Lady Seer-type-figure -- that

background

could wear them, while the speaking Time Lords - the President! - could the Master will try this planet-swap one day, and they must take action to safeguard

just have skullcaps and robes.) God knows how we'll afford it, though. I'm not having the future by planning against him...) All that shit. Then I slapped a great big label

them waffling on in a Welsh castle, saying 'FANBOY' over the whole thing, and ditched it. Fun, though. Even typing it

out now, I still wonder... no, don't. No. Funny how you shift, though. Five years ago,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 15:10:15 GMT even imagining that would have been impossible. Now, it's actually transmittable, and

DAVID TENNANT'S BACK horribly seductive. Fanboy levels rising! Definitely time to go.

Bad news. David is going into hospital! They're operating on his back! Yikes. It's a

prolapsed disc. Ow ow ow ouch. FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2008 17:04:00 GMT

Oh, the poor man. He must be devastated. That's terrible. Ouch. He has to drop out RE: MY ANKLES' ARSE

of the West End run of Hamlet. He thinks he might make some of the run, maybe after Gallifrey - oh, you know you want to! Imagine that narrative jump between the opening

Christmas, but they're saying six weeks off. scene on Gallifrey, all cloisters, temples, and Time Lord grandeur... and five minutes later,

the Master in a grubby public toilet, on Earth, all sordid and filthy. Besides, after all these

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 15:16:15 GMT years, do you really imagine that that brilliant crew couldn't pull off Gallifrey? Of course

they could. In fact, you owe it to them. (Oh, that's not fair. I'm joking. No, really, I am.) RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK You owe them Gallifrey. (I'm still joking. Honest.) But

go on. Please. It'd be amazing. Holy crap! Poor David. SIX WEEKS?! Knowing his work ethic, he must be devastated. Imagine being seven years old and watching Scene 1, Gallifrey. You'd wet yourself. At least he'll be back for filming, fingers crossed.

(He'll miss The Next Doctor press

Imagine

it. launch, though, won't he?)

Go on.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 15:10:15 GMT

They'll wet themselves, Russell! WET THEMSELVES!

RE:

DAVID TENNANT'S BACKFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER 2008 01:05:06 GMT

Yes,

the press launch is knackered. We're wondering whether to cancel, more as a

gesture

of support. I'm not sure that makes sense, but... oh God!**RE: MY ANKLES' ARSE**

They've done a timing on 4.15, and it's only 54 minutes. Bollocks. I'll have to invent

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER

TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 15:34:17 GMT
 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 23:32:29 GMT

RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK
RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACKIt does make sense. At this stage, and without David, what's the point of a press Enough with the guessing! (He he, I'm loving this.) David texted me from hospital today,launch? Most media outlets have everything they need by now, surely? Short of actually in bed, watching The Next Doctor on DVD. 'I feel much better already,' he said. Blesswatching the thing, and spoiling the plot twist. That's the only story left to tell. Why him. His operation is at Sam.not keep it a surprise? And that's coming from someone who loves a good launch

FROM:
 RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2008 16:08:30 GMT(mmm, nibbles!) and is gagging to see the finished episode.

THE RUNAWAY TRAINFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 23:22:55 GMT

We've got another runaway train at work. Whenever things escalate, Julie and I phone**RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK** each other up and yell, 'Runaway train!' And then hoot. And then climb on board. ButMark this day in your diary. Today, Steven told us whom he and Piers have cast as the Piers was wondering how to announce the new Doctor, and was musing that it would

be best on TV... when I piped up and said, 'Why not do an interview, and broadcastEleventh Doctor.

it after
 The Next Doctor repeat on New Year's Day? Complete surprise! So off they go,

YES!!! REALLY!!!

steaming ahead... with Julie and me left behind on the platform, shouting, 'Wait!!!

Oh, it's exciting! I think it's BRILLIANT! Genius, in fact. I never saw that coming.

Have you guaranteed secrecy? Are you using the Confidential crew? Has anyone toldOh my God, there's a new Doctor. He exists! And you're going to hate me. Really,

David?!'
 It's a runaway train, and I started it!really hate me. But -- I can't tell you who it is. Ha ha ha. This is Controller-of-BBC-

One-level secret. If I told you, I'd actually have to kill you. I'm serious. And who would

FROM:
 BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2008 16:24:05 GMTI e-mail then?

RE:

THE RUNAWAY TRAINFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 23:25:24 GMT

But

how's that going to work? How are they going to find an extra five minutes in the

TV

schedules to announce Richard Madeley as the Eleventh Doctor?**RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK**

WHAT?!!! Oh, Russell! Suddenly this subject line seems a bit inappropriate. COME

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2008 16:28:10 GMT**ON, WHO IS IT?! Okay, okay, you can't tell me, I understand (you bastard!), but...**

RE:

THE RUNAWAY TRAINNone question... please... is it wee Jimmy Krankie? Finally?!

That's

part of the Runaway Train. That's the schedulers, screaming from First Class,

with

Julie wading in, saying, 'For God's sake, it's the AFTERNOON, just SHIFT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 23:27:40 GMT

things!'

Meanwhile, in the driver's seat, Jay Hunt is saying, "This is so good, we should

RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK

announce

it in the schedules!' With all of us screaming, 'No!!!' Because then there will

It isn't wee Jimmy Krankie.

be so

much attention that some tabloid will go to ferocious lengths to spoil it. That's

like

asking for trouble. Once these trains run away, they really run away. P.S. Of

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 23:28:09 GMT

course

it isn't Richard Madeley. (He'll be in 4.18 as Rassilon, obviously.)6

RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK

Fine. Is it Rufus Hound? He has the tattoos for it.

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2008 16:34:43 GMT

RE:

THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 23:32:29 GMT

I can

see Jay Hunt's point. Imagine the viewing figures! Then again, who gives a toss

RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK

viewing figures when you could announce the new Doctor live on air as a
No.

about

Then again, if you kept it a secret, wouldn't lots of people miss it, because
be too busy watching ITV?

surprise?

they'd

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 10 DECEMBER 2008 23:29:21 GMT

RE: DAVID TENNANT'S BACK

Rassilon is the founder of Time Lord society on the planet Gallifrey.

6

How about Richard Madeley? With Judy as his companion.

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FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2008 06:45:22 GMT has got three editors working on five episodes at once, with Euros running between

editing suites. Madness. I think it's something to do with completing it before the
RE: THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

How
did it go? Spill the beans! financial year is out, even though it's not being shown until next summer. But that's

what leaves Euros free to direct 4.17/4.18 (he can write them, too, at this rate), so it's

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2008 19:49:23 GMT all worthwhile.

RE:

THE RUNAWAY TRAIN FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER 2008 20:37:13 GMT

I've
been all over the place. Three cities in one day, yesterday. Jane's party was a hoot, **RE: THE RUNAWAY TRAIN**
but too full and busy. Mainly, I ended up talking to Freema, who was on sparkling The Eleventh Doctor plans changed again today. Jane Tranter thought that the New form. (I asked her to come back for one day in 4.18. She said, 'Oooh yes!') Nice chance

to
catch up with Chris Chibnall as well. I realised how much I'd missed him. I love Year's Day announcement was slightly thrown away, so they've commissioned a half-

old
Chibs. My friend Annie Harrison-Baxter - who produced Bob & Rose, The Second hour documentary to go out on Saturday 3 January, on BBC One, covering the history

Coming and Mine All Mine -- was there too, and said, 'You're so successful now, you've of all the Doctors, all the way up to the new man, hopefully keeping him as a surprise at

got no
idea how much people out there hate you.' Ha ha. She's right, too. People say, the end! The Confidential team has just a few days to knock all that together.

'You're
so successful,' as though that makes my life all Stardust and happiness. If you

Meanwhile, The Next Doctor press screening is back on. (Don't! I know! Don't

know
the slightest thing about human nature, you'll know that the opposite is true. even start me!) I might die of blood pressure if I tell you all the Publicity/screening

It just makes me a target. I get so cocooned in Cardiff, I forget how vicious and meanshenanigans. No, they're not shenanigans, shenanigans are fun. This is far from fun.

it is in this industry. It's a high-end business, and I'm at the highest end of it, so thatBut I'll tell you one bit. They said that if we cancelled the screening, a journalist

leaves me open to attack. People keep asking why I'm not bothered by moaning fans,might use the Freedom of Information Act to find out how much cancelling the room

forgetting that the whole industry is that nasty. Frankly, I don't really care, and I've-- which we'd have to pay for now, at this late stage - would cost. For Christ's sake! The

always given as good as I get. So, that was a bit salutary, I suppose. But I walked awaydull bastards. This is what it's like now at the BBC.

laughing, and sort of vindicated by that. If that sort of thing loses me a friend or two, then they were useless friends in the first place.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 14 DECEMBER 2008 23:53:49 GMT

Anyway, it's been chaos, because we were meant to be using the Specials to shift,

RE: THE RUNAWAY TRAIN finally, on to high definition. Until yesterday, when the HD money was pulled out.

I just Googled 'Richard Madeley Doctor Who', and got nothing. It seems that He Some department turned around and told us that it was too expensive. Like we hadn't

Who Cannot Be Named is still, er, unnamed. Whoever it is, I hope it holds. How's been telling them that for four years! But no, they decide now, when we've done

your weekend been?

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TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

THE

But then, today, they buckled. HD is back on. But with less money. So, 4.15 has to

FROM:

RE:

ending with monstrous CG Water People on the loose... which will now be three men

Seriously,

the

passionate

so the whole thing is useless, but no, we're still going ahead. But with no Q&A! What's

too.

on air, and it was so beautiful. Have a look at the BAFTA website: there's a video
which she's interviewed, and talks about Doctor Who, about the courage she needed

Text message from: Ben

bring it back in 2005. It's really wonderful and inspirational.

Sent: 18-Dec-2008 14:04

best part of that screening was the secret interviews after. Yes, secret interviews! For
Have you seen today's London Evening Standard? The headline is:

top-secret Eleventh Doctor Confidential. They wanted me talking about the new guy
'FEARS GROW FOR DR WHO'. The paper is claiming that David's back

gal), and Jane and Julie, too, so they booked a room in that hotel where we had the

injury might jeopardise filming of the
Specials. screening, then whisked us up in the lift as
soon as we left the cinema so that we could wax

about the genius of He Who Cannot Be Named. Hilarious! With all those journalists

Text message from: Russell

missing the scoop. Honestly, even saying his (or her) name out loud on camera

Sent:

27-NOV-2008

23:02 felt odd, like it was breaking some
sort of law. They filmed me next to a plaster leopard. I'm

The stupid bastards. That is literally the opposite of what I said
today worried that it'll look like they filmed me at home, where I have plaster leopards.

in interviews at the press screening. I said, 'No contingency plans,
no Oh, and David T is fine. It's all going really well. He's up and about. It seems to be

delay, no rewrites.' THE
OPPOSITE! a properly successful operation. So, no
delays, contrary to what the Evening Standard

say. That hoarding was brilliant, wasn't it? 'FEARS GROW FOR DR WHO'. I

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER
2008 19:27:52 GMT

ran into the newsagents when I saw that, which proves that it sells papers.

RE: **THE** **RUNAWAY**
TRAIN Right, back to
Planet of the Dead-- which is still three minutes short, so I'm inventing

I am home. Lovely to see you at today's screening, briefly. What did you think of it? nonsense for Malcolm, UNIT's scientific adviser. Nice nonsense, though. Plus, we've

People seemed happy, although they're hardly going to say anything else to my face. cast Michelle Ryan as Christina. Great casting. I'm so tired, though. I got all insomniac

Bless Jane Tranter, though, on the edge of tears during her speech - she's been like that last night, and ended up with two hours sleep. Two hours! I'm surprised I wasn't falling

all week. She's Doctor Who's greatest supporter, with the power and money to back that asleep at the press screening.

up. Piers and Steven will miss her more than anything.

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2008 00:49:21 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. THURSDAY 18 DECEMBER 2008 22:36:27 GMT **RE: THE RUNAWAY TRAIN**

RE: **THE** **RUNAWAY**
TRAIN I meant to tell you,
the Christmas issue of NME chooses Doctor Who as the TV highlight

The press screening? Nice nibbles. Even the speeches weren't shit. (Press launch

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DOCTOR	WHOI	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN			

of the festive season. The magazine calls it the 'Best show on TV by miles'. The NME FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 21 DECEMBER 2008 03:04:18 GMT Finally, Doctor Who is cool. The preview also says: 'Sadly this heralds the beginning of **MORE 4.16** the end for David Tennant's reign. While we're on the subject of the new Doctor, please Lordy, 17 pages in one day! It's all quite straightforward, until we hit Page 13 or so, let it be Liam Gallagher: "Daleks, they're just dicks in bins." when suddenly there's a brand new way of telling the story from the Doctor's point of

view
- he realises that this Mars base is doomed - and that's got to be good. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2008 01:02:35 GMT

RE:	THE	RUNAWAY
TRAIN		FROM: RUSSELL T

DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. TUESDAY 23 DECEMBER 2008 01:33:26 GMT The NME That is cool! Blimey. Ah, that's nice. It's really hard to tell what the ratings **RE: MORE 4.16** will be this year, what with it being on an hour earlier than last year, and without Kylie. Here's some more. Better day today. (The last couple of days have been rubbish. Five Obviously, they won't be stratospheric, but we should do fine, I think. or six more pages, that's all.) The monsters have arrived! Once the monsters arrive, and

the
action starts, it all begins to motor. Action might be a bastard to write, but at the FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2008 03:28:44 GMT same time, if you follow it, it solves a lot of problems. Plainly and suddenly, there are **RE: THE RUNAWAY TRAIN** things that must happen. Keep control of them, and you've a rope to pull you through. Here's my Planet of the Dead rewrite. That might well be the shooting script. (Boring, I think. No way will I finish before Christmas, though. fiddly changes, though Malcolm's new stuff is rather funny.) Do you know, whenever I

read other people's Doctor dialogue, I'm always telling them off for making him sound FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER 2008 02:12:57 GMT

trite and glib. It drives me mad. Then I go to rewrite the dialogue... and I make the **RE: MORE 4.16** Doctor's even funnier and dafter! Thing is, I reckon my dialogue is funny, and no one More script. I'd hoped to get further. There's a lot of set-up in this episode, and I can else's is. I am a monster. feel in my bones that it's about to get massively action-packed and non-stop in about

It's 19 December already. It's Christmas soon. So soon! Haven't bought or done a ten pages' time - which is great, but the thought of it defeats me for now. I haven't got thing. Bollocks. Whatever will today bring...? the energy for action scenes. This whole Christmas lark drains it away. You can feel

the world stopping around you. Funny thing is, I keep picking up The Writer's Tale, FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2008 21:22:09 GMT and wondering where I was this time last year. It's more or less the same! I was halfway RE: THE RUNAWAY TRAIN through 4.12 on Christmas Eve, kicking myself for not finishing. See a pattern there? I spent this afternoon with Piers at TV Centre. I love that Sixth Floor. He bought me Mind you, last year, I had one-and-a-half episodes to go. This year, I've two-and-a-half coffee. We nattered about Doctor Who. I like Piers. He seemed stressed. (I wonder episodes. But I'm sure the filming of 4.17/4.18 is later than 3.12/3.13 was... surely? why!) These are tense times. I mentioned Richard Madeley, but Piers didn't blink, so Must be? I don't like to check in case I'm wrong. (Hey, I'm using the book as a guide! maybe I'm on the wrong track. (Unless it's Richard Whiteley? That would be a coup.) Everyone should write a book.) I just have to keep going. I might write that on a Post-Nice coffee, though. It - KEEP GOING! - and stick it above the computer. Or get it tattooed on my

But I'm all Who-ed out now. What a day! I'm off for drinks with my mate George. forehead. Yes, I'll do that. Are there any tattooists open in Cardiff on Christmas Eve? With any luck, he won't ask me about Doctor Who once. In other news, Julie wants me to pitch a New Gay Show to Showtime in the US

(they made the American Queer as Folk), which is exciting - though I'm not sure,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER 2008 23:10:03 GMT because I've got two or three other ideas jostling for space. I'm not sure which one RE: THE RUNAWAY TRAIN is going to come to the front of my mind first. Still, clear evidence that my mind is *Who-ed out? Tell me about it! I've started 4.16 (exactly 365 days before it's actually* moving on from Doctor Who. transmitted, probably, which is kind of funny), but on the Friday before Christmas, Anyway, I never ask how you are. Actually, that's terrible. I'm all me, me, me. How when everyone else is out getting pissed and pulling boys. I'm sat at home, typing. I d is your new life in Camden? Is it good or bad? I don't even know if you're in love with love to be out drinking with mates. (Hope you're behaving!) Instead, I'm typing 'EXT. anyone, man or woman or beast, or even just enjoying yourself or... well, as long as MARS'. That

dark and perverse power works on many shows. Still, I'm glad that your you're happy. Where are you spending Christmas?chat with Piers went well.

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DOCTOR
TALE

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S

CHAPTER

TWENTY-ONE: MR SMITH AND THE RUNAWAY TRAIN

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER 2008 03:03:26
GMT Text message from: BenRE: MORE

4.16

Sent: 25-

Dec-2008 19:24Christmas? Yes! With my parents, in Brighton. Are you heading back to Swansea?

Is Merry Christmas from Brighton! I enjoyed The Next Doctor. A great bigthere any chance

you'll finish 4.16 today? Or will it be hanging over you all Christmas? Cyberman

marched over London - what's not to love? And later it's'Keep going' is good advice. The tattoo on your

forehead, less so. *Wai/ace & Gromit?*

My friend George is getting an octopus tattoo on his arm next year. An octopus! And

some other seafaring stuff, like an anchor and a ship's wheel. He isn't a sailor; he just likes
Text message from: Benthese. His tattooist on Frith Street, Soho, has an eight-month

waiting list! It will take Sent: 25-Dec-2008 20:5814 visits over several months to

complete George's tattoo, which will cover half his torso Gromit has just saved the day in a

hot air balloon! Where do they getand cost the best part of his student loan. I wish I'd spent my
student loan on a tattoo. their ideas from?Apparently, it'll be so painful, he might

have to have his arm in a sling afterwards. And

that's everything I know about tattoos. Before this evening, I didn't even know
that. Text message from: Russell

25-Dec-2008 20:59FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER 2008 09:43:01 G
MT I'm watching! Thank God we were on first.RE: MORE 4.16

Christmas Eve. A fine old fog across the Bay, Beautiful! Your friend George
sounds Text message from: Ben

marvellous. How brave! I'd never have the nerve. But Christ almighty, his arm in a
sling?!

Sent: 25-Dec-2008 21:00I didn't know it could hurt that much. On reflection, I

don't think I'll bother getting the And now the plucky young female (dog!) is saving the day on a
forklift

truck.

You should sue.'KEEP GOING' tattoo. I'll stick the Post-It on my forehead instead. Yeah.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER 2008 13:18:20 GMT

message from: Russell

26-Dec-2008 09:52RE: MORE 4.16

million!!! And over 50% audience share! That's such a relief.Right, I'm off to Swansea. I've been thinking
about it, and I might come back with an

I thought we'd fall to eight or nine.octopus tattoo. But I might not. Have a lovely time in Brighton.

The CyberKing will
rise! (Etc.)

message from: Ben

Text

26-Dec-2008 09:54

Sent:

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 24 DECEMBER 2008 13:20:57 GMT

0.5 million less than last year, despite being on an hour earlier.

Only

RE: MORE 4.16

work.

Good

Good luck with the octopus tattoo. It might suit you. (It won't.)

message from: Russell

26-Dec-2008 10:16

Text message from: Russell

came second, after Wallace & Gromit. I hate Wallace & Gromit

Sent: 25-Dec-2008 12:40

Swansea calling Brighton! Merry Christmas! Shame there's nothing on TV

message from: Ben

Text

tonight. (It's the annual joke.)

26-Dec-2008 09:54

Sent:

doesn't count. You're still the top-rated TV show of the day

Plasticine

feature real human beings.

to

Half-hour animated TV short A Matter of Loaf and Death, created by Nick Park and featuring man-and-his-dog double act

7

and Gromit, was first broadcast on BBC One on Christmas Day 2008.

Wallace

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 28 DECEMBER 2008 15:04:36 GMT

SANTA'S ARSE

I'm back in the Bay. Back on e-mail! Christmas was fantastic. Yes, really. I had a marvellous time. I think it's the first Christmas in years that I haven't had a cold or a bad back. Even though I've got those scripts hanging over me, they hardly bothered me at all. I cut off completely, and my sisters weren't too mad, and my dad didn't cause any trouble, so that's a rare old time. And we got 11.7 million! When you think that we were ecstatic with The Christmas Invasion and The Runaway Bride getting nine-or-so million on the overnights... what the hell is happening with this show?! It's a mystery. But I love it.

Tomorrow, I'm getting a rough cut of that Confidential documentary for 3 January. The Eleventh Doctor! Talking! About the role! I'm so excited. Oh, and I'll tell you what's bugging me: those BBC One Christmas idents, with Wallace and Gromit in the bloody snow. Yes, lovely, etc. But why isn't that Doctor Who? Why isn't it David and a TARDIS, spinning about? I want that next year. I want the idem! I'm going to start a campaign.

That's all the news. Julie is off to New York today. I'll go back to Manchester on Tuesday. And I'm deliberately not thinking about the nightmare January and February that I've got ahead of me. Hope all's well with you.

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

GUNS DON'T
KILL PEOPLE,
TIME LORDS DO

In which a double-decker bus is crushed, a space
captain
shoots herself, and Matt Smith sings the Doctor
Who
theme down the phone from Starbucks

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 29 DECEMBER 2008 20:21:13 GMT

RE: SANTA'S ARSE

It's Bernard Cribbins' 80th today! I phoned him up. He
said, 'Get off the line! Wrong
number! There's only a 24-year-old in this house!' Good
old Bernard.

Then, I watched the Confidential documentary. It's
called The Ten Doctors. Or The

*Eleven Doctors. The new Doctor looks so handsome, and interesting,
and deep. David*

looks noble. Jane and Julie look glamorous. I look tired.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 29 DECEMBER 2008 21:08:33 GMT

RE: SANTA'S ARSE

»The new Doctor looks so handsome, and interesting, and deep.«
It's definitely not Richard Madeley, then. Damn.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 31 DECEMBER 2008 14:25:47 GMT

HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE

CONTAINER TERMINAL - 1
JEBEL ALI PORT
DUBAI - U.A.E



Box Line Agent: VASC - CAS
cc: MT Yard:
Reefer Yard:
Vessel File:

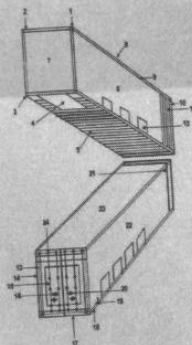
CONTAINER CONDITION/DAMAGE REPORT

DATE: 04-01-09
ROT NO: 638277
MV: ISN AL ROOMI VOY NO: MDDI
CONTAINER NUMBER: VACU4264307

CONTAINER DESCRIPTION: ☐ 20' ☒ 40' FR ☐ REEFER
☐ TANK ☐ EMPTY ☒ LADEN
☐ ALUMINIUM ☐ STEEL ☐ FIBERGLASS

DAMAGE CODES: B (BRUISE) C (CUT) H (HOLE) BR (BROKEN)
M (MISSING) R (RUST) S (DISTORTED)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. CORNER FILLING | 14. DOOR GASKET |
| 2. FRONT TOP RAIL | 15. LOCKING BAR |
| 3. BOTTOM END RAIL | 16. LOCKING BAR RETAINER |
| 4. TUNNEL | 17. REAR BOTTOM RAIL |
| 5. CROSS MEMBERS | 18. SIDE RAIL |
| 6. LEFT SIDE | 19. DOOR HOLD BACK |
| 7. FRONT SIDE | 20. LOCKING BAR HANDLE |
| 8. TOP SIDE RAIL | 21. CORNER POST |
| 9. TARP TIEDOWN RINGS | 22. RIGHT SIDE |
| 10. CORNER POST | 23. OPEN TOP TARPULING |
| 11. SIDE POST | 24. LOCKING BAR KEEPER |
| 12. PORK POCKETS | |
| 13. HINGES | |



REMARKS:

DURING YARD OPS DAMAGED.
CONTACT OF CARSD
BADLY DAMAGED.

SUPERINTENDENT SIGNATURE: [Signature]

INCIDENT DATE & TIME: 05-01-09 0500 HRS.

SUPERVISOR: [Signature]

TALLY CLERK NAME:

ID NO:

REVISION : 03

JUNE, 07

DPW-CAR-CON-003-F03

I'm back in Manchester, and I'm going to have a nice time tonight. My mates Tracy

and Bobby are up from Swansea. Phil C is coming round. The house is stocked with

booze, food, cheese and everything, and we're going to play cards all night. Yes, cards.

We love playing cards. It's cards night. I'm really looking forward to it. (Consults The

Writer's Tale - yes, much better than last year, when I was missing Billies wedding with

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE CHAPTER

TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO

a bad cold in the Bay.)
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 2 JANUARY 2009 19:36:14 GMT

FROM:

But what a year! Let's never forget how amazing it's been. Hope you have a
good **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE**

When
was David told the Eleventh Doctor's identity? What was his reaction?time tonight. Good
luck!

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 2 JANUARY 2009 22:33:59 GMTFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL
T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 31 DECEMBER 2008 21:08:33 GMT

RE:

HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSERE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE

He's
been first-to-be-informed at every stage, I think. He was kept up to date on theYes, what a
year. I'm ending it as I began it: in central London, watching fireworks. At

auditions
throughout the whole process. That's both a courtesy (it would be awful if heleast this year, it
shouldn't take me four hours to get home. P.S. HAPPY NEW

found
out major news through a leak!), but also because his advice is genuinely
sound.YEARRRRRRRR!!!

I don't
know how he actually feels, although I did get a great text off him after

The
Next Doctor, saying, 'Can't we just keep the Christmas ones?!' I bet he feels
*fine,*FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 1 JANUARY 2009 16:08:18 GMT

though,
or he wouldn't be leaving the show.**RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE**

HAPPY NEW YEARRRRRRRR to you, too! I didn't actually drink last night. I was

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 3 JANUARY 2009 14:06:55 GMTtoo busy being host. (And
there was so much alcohol in the house, I thought I could

RE:

HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSEwake up on a dredger to Montenegro.) But Phil was on great
form. Singing away! It

It's on
the news! The BBC News! Not the announcement, but the announcementwas brilliant to see
him so relaxed, and having such a laugh. Even the cards descended

about

the announcement! Insane. I've got friends texting me asking who it is. (I am into chaos. By two in the morning, they'd all discovered fennel vodka in my cupboard.

remaining
stern and professional.)I didn't know that fennel vodka even existed. But there it was. By three in the morning,

my Swansea women had decided they fancied Phil and wanted to kiss him, and chased

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 3 JANUARY 2009 14:47:11 GMT
him around the house until he fled in a taxi. So, the Swansea contingent is only now

RE:
HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSEwaking up. These are my last hours of holiday - I've got to start writing again tomorrow -

Tell
me about it! I've had so many texts. Never been so popular. Why do they presume but they're all still over the limit, so they're staying another night. Hey ho. But all in

I even
know who it is? I'm tempted to tell them that the Eleventh Doctor is 'nowall, a great New Year.
safely tucked away in
the Celebrity Big Brother House... whoever he or she may be!

Oh
God, I hope we make it through to 5.30pm! That's when The Eleven Doctors is
transmitted,
right? I can't bear the suspense. Oh, that BBC press release, which quotes

Text message from: Ben

Piers: I
just can't wait to tell everyone who it is - it has been a nail-biting Christmas

Sent: **2-Jan-2009**
16:22 trying to keep this under
wraps!' Well, quite.

The producer of BBC Breakfast just phoned. They want me to go on

Monday morning's show to discuss the new Doctor. Is that okay? Thought
FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 3 JANUARY 2009 15:26:58 GMT

I'd best check. (And is it okay if I go on dressed as Bannakaffalatta? I
RE: HAPPY NEW
YEAR'S ARSE

want to create an impression.)
It's so
exciting, though. It's amazing to see the size of this speculation. This show
has

become
something truly mental. I'm getting texted by people it's really hard to say

Text **message** **from:**
Russell no to, people like Freema, so I've just
stopped replying. I'll leave it till tomorrow. But

Sent:

2-Jan-2009

16:25

Piers e-mailed about five minutes ago, and he's really happy with how it's going. It's still

You're their Doctor Who expert! Of course it's fine. (Not Bannakaffalatta, going to be a massive surprise to most people - like it was with Tom Baker back in the

though. Go dressed as a Cybershade.) I think the news that the 70s, I suppose. I just want to stay in all night and read the internet. Proof, if proof were

announcement is tomorrow is about to go live on the BBC website. needed, that I really should be leaving this job. Oh, but I bet it'll go bonkers out there.

Madness ensues... And David might be going back on stage tonight! Well, he needs the work now. Ha

ha!
Julie just phoned him, and he's loving all the Eleventh Doctor frenzy. Wait till you

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TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DODOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

see Lis Sladen in tonight's documentary. She's backstage at her Peter Pan panto, in full of four or five pages a day. That's how I used to write, in the first two series, before

the workload became so mental. I'm going to try to get that rhythm back, maybe not costume as Mrs Darling, so it looks like she dresses like that at home! (Which might

working all night, maybe keeping those four or five pages to daylight hours so that I'm even be true.)

not so knackered. That's the plan. Don't laugh. FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 3 JANUARY 2008 18:08:24 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009 13:00:55 GMT **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE**

MATT SMITH IS THE DOCTOR!!! **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE**

How does 4.17/4.18 feel at the moment? Still loose and empty? Or bursting with ideas?

How many people will be saying, 'Who?!' I did know him, actually. No, I did!

I'm heading back to TV Centre in a bit, to do two hours of down-the-line regional. He's the one who was so superb in those BBC adaptations of Philip Pullman's Sally

radio interviews about Matt Smith. He gets cast, I do the interviews -- how did that Lockhart novels, and wasn't Billie Piper. He has the right look, doesn't he? I hope he

happen? I should have said no. It's going to be gruelling. keeps the hair --

No, wait a minute. He's 26. Oh my God. I'm 26! He was born 11 days after me. I've

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009 13:22:24 GMT just checked this on the internet. Doctor Who is younger than I am! Sob! I'm old.

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE

main worry at the moment is the Christmas Day episode -- to make it really fit

Christmas

Day. The Doctor is on a dark, personal quest to meet his own death, and the

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S
ARSE Master is a gibbering
cadaver, and there's a loneliness haunting the whole thing... but

Yes, younger than you. Younger is the way to go. (A motto that's seen me through life.) I have to remember that it's 6pm or 7pm, on 25 December, with everyone watching.

Piers loves him, Steven loves him, Jane loves him. Jane says that they had dinner at _____ Somehow, for Christ's sake, keep the fun! More pressingly, the episode has to have _____

Steven's last month, with Matt, and it was lovely. This is going to be brilliant. Seriously, an identity in itself, not just as the first part of a two-parter. It's never going to feel

I think this is genius. I'd been sitting here for months, quietly thinking about who I'd standalone, but it needs to, I don't know, have a sort of completion about it so that it's

cast as the new Doctor if I had a choice -- and I'd been blank. I'm too close to David, a good watch in itself, not relying solely on the New Year's Day episode.

I suppose. But with this bit of casting, it's like it swept into my head and cleared away Gallifrey keeps swinging to and fro in my head. Yes, there's the solemnity and

the cobwebs. I can see Matt as the Doctor. I thought he was amazing in *Party Animals*, pomposity of those old men in big collars, which is thrilling, but are they the villains,

did you see that? I only watched it because I once had a very strange phone call with _____ in the end? Did the Doctor have to destroy them, because an eternity of war with _____

a member of the cast's mother -- long story -- but then I stayed to watch because of the Daleks had turned them into vile (gibbering, Master-like?) monsters? No, not

this amazing Smith bloke. It's sort of what I was reaching for way back, maybe, when I monsters, but bastards. Men who will want the Earth destroyed, if it brings Gallifrey

was imagining someone like Russell Tovey in the lead -- all sort of unexpected

and back. Does the Doctor end up fighting the whole lot of them?

unpredictable. Exactly what Doctor Who needs. The shock of the new. I think that's Having just typed 'Does the Doctor end up fighting the whole lot of them?', I've

such a clever decision. realised that the only answer to that is yes'. Blimey. Bad Time Lords! But hold on

aren't I bringing them back because I was inspired by Julie's desire to see their beauty,

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009 12:52:48 GMT and awe, and majesty? Why am I undercutting them now? Although, I can sort of feel

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE that it's possible to have both - to have the majesty in 4.18, Scene 1, Gallifrey, the

I'm finding it difficult to get into 4.16 at the moment... mainly because I'd rather cloaks, the solemnity... ready for a final reveal that they're bastards. Maybe.

be on 4.17/4.18. I'm kind of looking forward to their problems. I should have three Have a good time on the radio. Tell them all that I'm the best and Series Five will be

weeks each for those last two, which is tight, but not as tight as it has been, and I'm rubbish. Yeah, do that.

hoping a blast of energy as I spot the finishing line will get me through the last episode.

The end! The very end! (I must not get a cold. The last thing I need now is a bloody -ROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009 13:27:05 GMT

cold.) I'm really going to try to work diligently this time. I'm sick of my own system **RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE**

of leaving stuff, and leaving stuff, and leaving stuff, then flying by on adrenalin and 1 m literally on my way out the door, but...

panic. I'm determined to start on 4.17, and give myself a comparatively calm schedule

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TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DODOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

»aren't I bringing them back because I was inspired by Julie's desire to see their

beauty, and awe, and majesty? Why am I undercutting them now? Although, I can sort

COMPANIONS

CASTING

This e-mail exchange between Russell, Julie Gardner, Tracie Simpson, of feel that it's possible to have both«

Peter

Bennett (first assistant director on 4.17/4.18) and Andy Pryor charts the

Of course it's possible to have both. BRING ON GALLIFREY! The most beautiful

production

team's attempt to book all of the Tenth Doctor's companions for men are the biggest bastards. Think of it like that. Except that's not true. That's only

one-

off appearances at the end of 4.18...true of women.

»Tell them all that I'm the best and Series Five will be rubbish.«

FROM:

JULIE GARDNER TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES; TRACIE SIMPSON. MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009 16:25:05 GMT

Will

do.

CASTING

- TWO-PARTER

Can

I confirm which regular cast you want to return for this? Is it as follows:

Catherine FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009 13:32:54 GMT

Tate

- three days? To be shot in scenes with Jacqueline King and Bernard Cribbins?

RE:

HAPPY

NEW

YEAR'S

ARSE

One location? Their

house? Bernard Cribbins - to book through the block. Jacqueline

»Except that's not true. That's only true of women.«

King -- three days or less? Billie

Piper -- one day. John Barrowman -- one day. Freema

You'll have to be my expert on that. I will pay you a consultancy fee.
Agyeman - one day. Jessica Hynes - one day. Do you need Noel Clarke? Is there

anyone

I'm missing?

Text message from: Ben

Sent:

5-Jan-2009

15:37

FROM: RUSSELL T

DAVIES TO: JULIE GARDNER; TRACIE SIMPSON, MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009

16:58:12 GMT

I'm bleeding from the forehead here - 17 eight-minute interviews!

I'm **RE: CASTING - TWO-PARTER**

down to BBC Essex, and running out of new ways to say that Matt Smith
Yes, and Noel Clarke -- one day. Noel's day will be with Freema, the same scene. And

will be
amazing. Lis Sladen
and Tommy Knight, together -- one day. This might also need (want?)

Daniel

and Anjli as well, but is the budget going through the roof?1

Text message from:

Russell Catherine and Jacqui are
tricky. Three days, certainly -- but maybe more. I'd need

Sent:

5-

Jart-200916:15

Catherine at 1) the

Nobles' house, 2) the road outside a cafe, 3) ext. church. All

You media whore! Just snap and storm
off. daytime -- or day-for-night int. house. But I
might need Jacqui for 1) Nobles' house,

2)

ext. church, 3) city shopping streets, but that last one would be at night. And I
can't

guarantee

that this won't expand a bit (though not hugely). Equally, tell me what I can

Text message from:

Ben and can't have now,
and I won't write it!

Sent:

5-

Jan-200916:21

All these

appearances would be daytime, except for Billie -- she'd be a night shoot.

I'm so bored that I'm making things up. I think Britney Spears should be Don't panic, Tracie, but that could be a night shoot on the Tylers' estate. With a snow

the new companion. She could mime the lines, badly.' machine. Lordy. On the same night, we'd need Camille.

Blimey,

does this make sense? Incidentally, I have mentioned this to Freema, and she

Text message from:
Russell said yes, so that's a good start...

Sent: 5-Jan-2009 16:36

FROM:

JULIE GARDNER TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES; TRACIE SIMPSON, MONDAY 5 JANUARY 2009 17:10:21 GMT

Keep going! Fly the flag!

RE:

CASTING - TWO-PARTER

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 6 JANUARY 2009 02:44:31 GMT

BRILLIANT

Thank you.

Tracie

-- let's coordinate how we call everyone, because they may all talk, so we

RE: HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE

Here's more 4.16. Mainly, I've been through the first 40 pages altering where we meet should put in calls together at the same time before Andy contacts the agents officially.

people and introduce different rooms. It's quite an art. Really tricky to get right. Like, do I could find call time on Wednesday afternoon, if that's any good?

you see the sickbay only when it's needed, or do you seed it in advance, to give the place 1 Daniei Anthony and Anjli Mohindra play Clycte Langer and Rani Chandra respectively in The Sarah Jane Adventures.

more size and complexity? Usually, I'd say just see it when it's part of the plot. However,

when a story is as internal and claustrophobic as this one, you need to flex your muscles,

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO

FROM: ANDY PRYOR TO: TRACIE SIMPSON; JULIE GARDNER; PETER BENNETT, WEDNESDAY 7 JANUARY 2009 15:18:18 GMT

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 7 JANUARY 2009 03:16:11 GMT

RE: CASTING - TWO-PARTER

HAPPY NEW YEAR'S ARSE

Okay, folks, I've done some sums on all of this, and it will depend on several factors very happy with the latest few scenes of 4.16. So happy, in fact, that I thought of - whether the dates are spread out for Catherine and Jacqueline, whether we can get opening line of 4.17, and went ahead and wrote it. It has begun! The beginning of agents to accept the same rates as last time, and whether we can negotiate a favoured end. That feels good, to have a file named '4.17', even though it's just one line. But nations, one-off fee for those people coming back for one day. I've attached a document been trying to think of that line for ages. Something mythic and huge. Then I was detailing all the costs depending on what scenario we go for. Let me know your in the kitchen, boiling the kettle, and thought of it. thoughts and we can decide how to approach this.

FX SHOT - PLANET EARTH

FROM: JULIE GARDNER TO: ANDY PRYOR; TRACIE SIMPSON; PETER BENNETT; RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 7 JANUARY 2009 16:27:59 SMT

RE: **CASTING** **-** **TWO-**
PARTER
THE EARTH, suspended in space, in all its beauty.



I think we must push for favoured nations on the one-days. I feel we have to do this in

this, the NARRATOR. A stranger; an old, wise man.

the current climate. We really need to be sensible. The budget is going to be well and
truly spent across these episodes. Russell - do you agree, as you'll be facing a
possible NARRATOR

is said that in the final days of Planet Earth,
rewrite if we fail on this?

had bad dreams.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: JULIE GARDNER; ANDY PRYOR; TRACE SIMPSON; PETER BENNETT, WEDNESDAY
7 JANUARY 2009 16:48:25 GMT

RE: CASTING - TWO-
PARTER

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 8 JANUARY 2009 08:57:58 GMT

Oh, of course. Anyone falling out would have a knock-on effect, though, I've got
to FW: BUS DAMAGED

say. If, for example, any one companion said no, then the omission would look
weird. Oh my Lord.

It's inviting a tabloid story saying that we snubbed them, or that they snubbed
us. Oh shit.

More importantly, for kids, it would just look odd -- from the Doctor's point of

view, The bus arrived in Dubai. Someone
he'd never leave one of them out! If that happened, we'd have to drop everyone,
except dropped a cargo container on it. Oh my
Billie and Camille (because that's going to be a nice coda to the whole of our
time God. Off to Cardiff. More later!
on the series), and Donna (because Donna, via Wilf, is more woven into the story).
But let's see, as we go along. If we did lose one of them, then we
could try something
very clever and have the Doctor looking on from afar with previous footage. Oh, I'm
cunning! Easier said than done, mind you.
Having said that, if there's a problem with Jessica Hynes, then that scene is a bit of
a luxury and is independently droppable.

kind permission

Reproduced with

and explore the location a bit more. Also, it's hard trying to iron out the bits that are
too reminiscent of The Satan Pit or 42. (Did they worry about this in the '60s? When
*The Moonbase was the same as The Ice Warriors?*¹ No, they did not.)
These outer-space-
crewmember stories are the hardest to write. Everyone is trapped in functional jobs.
Actually, back in the '60s, you can see why stories like The Moonbase had that ahead-
of-
its-time multiracial casting. They had to, or everyone's the bloody same!

¹ The Moonbase and The Ice Warriors are both 1967 Doctor Who serials.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 8 JANUARY 2009 19:49:36
GMT If, however, we go with Bus #1 in its damaged state -- well, The Mill has
started toRE: FW: BUS

clean bus (for the CG shots of it flying) and will have to completely reworkBut, but... OH. MY. GOD!!! How did that happen?! How can you crush a bus?! It the model to make it damaged. Can they do that in time? It turns out, yes, but they'llcan be written around, can't it? Oh God! A journey through a wormhole is bound to need detailed photos of the damage, to reproduce it -- which doesn't allow for the fact

and
the damaged bus can't drive to the desert now, and will have to be put on a lowWE'RE ALL
DOOMED!!!

And then, no, hold on -- even if we use the wrecked Bus #1, we'll still need to buy

Someone at the port in Dubai dropped a cargo container on it! What are the
be shot before Dubai, and die downstairs interior of Bus #1 in Dubai is
so wrecked

locked into vital road closures, we'll need Bus #2 intact after we've shot the schedule,

interior
scenes in studio. In other words, Bus #2 cannot be wrecked for our studioIt was very
exciting! The options are... film with the damaged bus, because that's

Oh, that's like one-tenth of today's conversations. In the end, we decided thatseconds of seeing the photo.) Problem with that is, we don't know how much work

only concrete fact was that a duplicate Bus #3 would be impossible to find and the damaged bus needs to make it safe, and to transport it into the desert. We don't

sanction
for use in time, so we have to go with Bus #1, in Dubai, in its wrecked state. even know if it can stand up, or whether it's leaning on something and will fall apart

With
the Dubai shoot at the end of the run, that gives Ed Thomas' team four weeks as soon as someone whispers at it. It's impossible to tell from that single photo. We've

to fly
out there and make the bus safe. We went all the way back to our very first people itching to fly out and inspect it for health and safety, but the port is closed for

solution!
Also, it's the solution that got Ed's eyes fired up with excitement, and that's the weekend, so we can't get to look at the bus until Sunday night.

the
most powerful weapon we've got. Once that man is determined to do something,

But! If we go for the second option -- to ship our second, clean bus out there (the
then
he makes it happen. He is marvellous. As you said straight away, the bus will
made-to-look identical bus that we've got in Cardiff, to shoot all the Earth scenes)

arrive
through the wormhole, trashed. I think that's going to look magnificent. It's

-- then it needs to leave in 11 hours' time! Yikes! Plus, if we do ship out our clean bus,

better!
The Doctor has to fly this creaking, hissing, clapped-out wreck back through
we have the problem of buying a third bus to shoot the Earth scenes. Money isn't a
the
wormhole and over London!

problem for any of this, because we should be covered by insurance. (Although, when
I got to the office, it turned out that we'd only checked the marine insurance so far,
Bloody hell. But as ever -- what a brilliant team. Everyone focused, determined,
which is useless, because the bus was on dry land when they dropped a bloody great
laughing, inventive, honest, and absolutely committed to making it work. They are all

container on it. But looking at that bus, it's hard to imagine an insurance company
geniuses. I love them. I truly love them.

protesting.) Amazingly, buying a third bus has turned out to be the biggest headache
And now I have to read 12 Sarah Jane scripts by tomorrow morning. I am dying.

of the day. They're not easy to find. Especially since we'd found a bus that fitted the

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 10 JANUARY 2009 00:26:40 GMT

specifics of the story - hydraulic doors, no middle door, an open drivers' cab, etc. It's

hard to match the two that we've got already. Finding a third bus could take three
to **RE: FW: BUS DAMAGED**

four weeks - yes, weeks! - and that's just the start of the workload, as then the
bus Joe Lidster is a genius. This is a fact. If he works hard, gets his head down, and
realises

has to be declared part of the BBC fleet (!), and insured, and covered with our
own what he's capable of, then in ten years' time, he could be... me. Sorry, no other
way to

non-copyright adverts and logos. Plus, the bus sent to Dubai had to have its
wiring end that sentence! Me! He could have his own studio, turning out his own
shows, and

removed so that we could control it, and the hydraulics taken out of the door for
safety be king of all that he surveys. He has just handed in a new Sarah Jane story; it was
an

during transport, and the hydraulics then reinstalled, etc, etc, etc. (I had no idea
how emergency commission when another script fell through; it's the cheap episode.2 He

hard these departments work.) So, if we're buying a Bus #3, and sending out our
clean wrote treatment after treatment, in a rush, and they were all lacking, until I
actually

Bus #2, we have to decide TODAY, because Bus #2 has to leave NOW. Or do we film

on a beach in the Gower?

The Sarah Jane Adventures 3.3/3.4.

2

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER

TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO

lost my temper just before Christmas, told him to stop bothering me and just write calling her the mad woman in the attic! She was in at six this morning. But during something... and then he handed in a first draft that's poetic, and beautiful, and clever, all this, as she cheers the troops along and solves 57 problems with her left hand, he and made me burst into tears at the end. But the best bit was the meeting with him mum has been diagnosed with bone cancer. Julie is sitting there wondering whether today, because he clearly has no idea how he does it, or why. He flies on instinct and the treatments will work, and how long they will take, because it's so hard to face. It's imagination, so much so that he can barely explain what he's written. This isn't just exactly - literally, stage by stage - the same as my mum. This is how it ends. Slowly. being bad in meetings, which a lot of writers are. Joe really doesn't know, yet every You can be surrounded by doctors, and goodwill, and charts, and drugs, and hope, instinctive choice is fascinating. And right. making it so hard to see. Poor, lovely Julie.

Thing is, if he doesn't start believing in himself, he could get torn apart in this Anyway, no more script tonight. I'm too tired. Those Sarah Jane script meetings lasted

career. Script meetings are all 'Why does this character do this? Why does she do eight hours, and I've a long, savage weekend ahead. I have to finish 4.16 by Monday, for

that?' And that's where the script process starts to fall apart, if the writer isn't robust. the start of prep. Then, on Wednesday, there's a read-through of Planet of the Dead. David

When the writer can't answer clearly, then everyone leaps in - trying to help, genuinely - Tennant, back in the room! I can't wait.

saying, 'What if he did this? What if she did that?' If you're not careful, that creative

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2009 01:30:19 GMT

process becomes invasive. Most writers sitting in pubs saying 'They've destroyed my

work' caused the problem themselves, because they weren't vigorous enough, because **LIFE ON MARS**

their script invited changes. Producers are trying to build something tangible out of I'm ten pages from the end. Do I keep going all night? Or finish it

off tomorrow? I've

something that's simply an act of the imagination, and very often a flawed act. Of got an empty day tomorrow, so I could write all day, and deliver by late afternoon.

course idiots can do damage, but most of them are trying to help. Everyone's happy if a But prep starts tomorrow. There's nothing better than them arriving at their desks in

the morning, to find the script waiting for them. Psychologically, that's a good start. script works. Everyone's life is easier.

But I'm knackered. This is all one, long action sequence - the last 30 pages are one big It's such a fine line. Writers have to be strong, if only because there are so many

fight. I've had a whole weekend, fighting on Mars. Like you do.

forces battering them. We're a marvellous team, and we understand Joe, or we try

to understand, so I hope we're getting the best out of him. But if you're Production

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2009 01:42:44 GMT

Company A dealing with New Writer B, and you're faced with his vagueness and

RE: **LIFE ON MARS**

uncertainty, then... well, Joe will become the writer complaining in the pub. What do

Get some sleep! Even if the script arrives at their desks in the morning, they won't read you do, though? What do you say to make a person strong? Well, you say all this. But

it until 2pm. Adelaide Brooke and the crew of Bowie Base One -- or those that are still

you're working on someone's character, and I haven't got the magic words to make that

alive, at least - can wait until morning. 3

change, no matter how much I blather on. But I do think, after all these years,

and all

those meetings, and all those writers clutching their scripts, I can tell who is, or who is

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2009 02:19:39 GMT

going to be, a good writer. Not just on the page, but because of who they are. What they

RE:

LIFE ON MARS

think. How they make their way through the world.

You're

right. Too much to do. Not finished. But almost! Tired. Zzzz.

I feel really moved by today's meeting. I can't get it out of my head. I had to write that

down. It really affected me, how precious and precarious this whole thing is. Although,

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 12 JANUARY 2009 18:24:25 GMT

in the end, I think talent will out. There aren't enough good writers for genius to be

thrown away. Joe will get better, and he'll get stronger. I worried about this. I was quite

RE: LIFE ON MARS

harsh with him. I worried that I went too far. But then I went outside for a cigarette,

Done! Finito!

and looked up at those blue metal walls of Upper Boat, and thought, seriously, in ten

136.

EXT. LONDON STREET - NIGHTS

years' time, this could be Joe's, with the Thirteenth Doctor running about inside.

In other news... you'd never have dreamt that a bus was trashed in Dubai yesterday.

FX: THE TARDIS materialises .

Everything is carrying on as normal. Nothing can't be solved. It was Ed's 40th birthday,

³ Adelaide Brooke, the captain of Mars' Bowie Base One. was called 'Valentine Kerenski' in Phil Ford's original script.

so we had drinks and balloons in the Meeting Room. Meanwhile, Julie has moved

⁴ This is Russell T Davies and Phil Ford's original ending to The Waters of Mars, in which the Doctor bids Adelaide farewell

back

on Earth, outside her London house, having changed history and saved her life, along with the lives of Mia Bennett (a

into Upper Boat, because Piers is moving into her office now, and they're already geologist on Bowie Base One) and Yuri Kerenski (the base's nurse).

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO

THE DOCTOR strides out - ADELAIDE following, then MIA,
running And she's just as
scared of him; though equal to him. The Doctor

out, scared, away from the Tardis - YURI last -
now with a
strange new arrogance.

THE
DOCTOR

The 19th of December, 2059. Five more shopping days to
go, They're a couple.

merry Christmas! Yuri, help that Gadget-thing out of the
Tardis.5 Much as I love a funny
robot...

DOCTOR

see. Early days.

(NB, cutting away, around the moment of Gadget's actual exit
from the
Tardis!)

but if they stay together... say, there's a child, a

ADELAIDE
... child born into the world,
who was never meant to exist.

alone me.

that's my daughter's house. It's London. I'm home.

DOCTOR

THE

DOCTOR Time will
compensate. I can feel it, even now. Captain

inspires her granddaughter face-to-face, isn't

And it's
snowing!
better? Just get Susie Fontana Brooke on board that

speed ship in 30 years' time, everything's back on

YURI

No, that's the Carbon Wash, cleaning up the atmosphere, we
get this at eight o'clock every
night.

THE

DOCTOR But you can't
know that.

I'm calling it snow.

DOCTOR

MIA

...but what is that thing??! It's... bigger, I mean
it's If I say so, then it
happens.

bigger inside, who the hell are you?? What is he??

And she's so freaked out, she runs away -

one should have that much power.

Yuri looks to Adelaide for permission -

DOCTOR

ADELAIDE

Go after her.

She steps away, unnerved by him.

YURI

Yes

ma'am.

DOCTOR

(to

Doctor)

the
Adelaide. I've done it

before. In small ways. Saved some

Thank

you.

people. But never someone as important as you. Oh,

good!

Then he turns, runs. Following Mia, off into the night.

Gadget trundles after them. A little wave of its hand. 'Little people'?

Who decides they're so unimportant,

GADGET

Gadget-

gadget!

DOCTOR

was a war. A long time ago. And ever since then,

Leaving Adelaide and the Doctor alone, in the snow. I thought I was

just a survivor. But I'm not. I'm the

That's who I am. The Time Lord Victorious.

5 Gadget is a three-foot-tall Wall-E-type robot probe on tracks. It has big camera-lens eyes. The script says:
'Despite being in ADELAIDE

advance of anything today, it looks low-tech, dented and abused. Gadget has two arms, complete with skeletal hands. From

its body hangs a full selection of tools - a tool for every job.'

there's no one to stop you?

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE		CHAPTER	TWENTY-TWO: GUNS
DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO			

Looks back. Upset. Calls out:	THE DOCTOR	But she stops.
-------------------------------	------------	----------------

No.

again?	ADELAIDE
	Will I ever see you

And then, but then, he hears...

DOCTOR

A song.

No. Never.

An old, familiar, haunting song.

Tardis.

He goes inside the

He looks up...

watching.

Adelaide stays

Behind Adelaide, a good distance away...
ancient engines, in a flurry of snow; the Tardis

FX: the grind of

fades way...

An OOD. Ood Sigma. Surrounded by snow and Ood-song.

For him.

And Adelaide is crying.

Staring at him.

TO:

The Doctor stares back. Defeated.

NIGHT

137. INT. TARDIS -

Hold on him: blinking, upset, all this sudden arrogance draining
away. Like he's collapsing inside. Then:
controls. Manning the console, grave.

THE DOCTOR at the

THE DOCTOR
closer on him. He's breathing hard. Summoning

Slowly, closer and

...I've gone too far.
nerve, the fight.

up the energy, the

ADELAIDE

And then he decides:

What is it, what's wrong?

DOCTOR

She looks round.

No.

The Ood has gone.
there.
TO:

No one

The Doctor recovering, quiet.
TIME VORTEX

138. FX SHOT:

THE DOCTOR
hurtles away, down the Red Vortex.

The TARDIS

I think I've been summoned.

The final journey.

ADELAIDE

What
for?
OF EPISODE 4.16

THE DOCTOR

My death.
TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009 13:29:35 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES

(pause, then:)

RE: LIFE ON MARS

Go home, Adelaide Brooke. Go to your daughter, and her
rewrite, because I woke up realising something horrible
daughter. Hold them tight.

I'm in the middle of a 4.16

not sure what to do. The only way to find out if I'm right is

about that script, and I'm

And she's so scared.
mail that I just sent to Julie:

to write it. Here's the e-

*I thought of this
while I was writing yesterday, and rejected it. Then, I woke up*

Runs towards the house.

*this morning,
knowing that I'm right. Adelaide Brooke has to die. And to do so, she*

The Doctor walking towards the Tardis, heavy-hearted... *has to take her own life. Yikes! Keep reading! I can make this discreet. The whole*

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S	CHAPTER
TALE				
TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO				

thing is about the Doctor fighting the Laws of Time, and growing in arrogance, and
 'Little people'? What, like Mia and Yuri? Who decides

so unimportant, you?

power, until he's brought down at the end. Nothing can show him the unstoppable

of time, and the foolishness of his actions, more than Adelaide's death. He's launched
 . THE DOCTOR

into his final story by this tragedy -- and his need for a human companion. Look what's
 For a long time now, I thought I was just a survivor. But

happening to him! A man seeking redemption. It's so tough, this, because it's seriously
 I'm not. I'm the winner. That's who I am. The Time Lord

the only ending that this story should have. (That's why I want Easter to be such a lark

-- see where we're heading!) But you don't kill heroes easily. Maybe this has to be done.
 ADELAIDE

And while I was typing to you, Julie just phoned -- she hadn't read that e-mail, but had
 And there's no one to stop you?

read the script, and was phoning to say that she had a problem: Adelaide must die! Ha

DOCTOR

ha	ha.	Oh,	she's	No.
good.				

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009 15:02:01 GMT

is wrong, Doctor. I don't care who you are. The Time**RE: LIFE ON MARS**

Victorious is wrong. Adelaide kills herself! On BBC One! At teatime! And it's the Doctor's fault! Now, that's

DOCTORdark. But it's the right ending to that story, isn't it? Good move.

P.S. Piers just e-mailed. It looks like I've secured Matt Smith's first magazine interview
That's for me to decide. Now, you'd better go home.about his casting as the Eleventh Doctor! It's this Thursday.
(of the house) All locked up,

been away. Still, that's easy.

FROM RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009 16:13:15 GMT
He points the sonic screwdriver at the house, whirrs.

RE: LIFE ON MARS

OH MY GOD about the Matt Smith exclusive! World first! That's so brilliant. Get in
The clunk of locks; one upstairs light comes on.

there with the new boy!
DOCTOR

Here's the new ending to Scene 136...
All yours.

ADELAIDE

The whole of history could change. The future of the human
Is there nothing you can't do?
race. Doctor. No one should have that much power.

DOCTOR

THE

DOCTOR Not any more.

Tough.

she turns away from him -

She steps away, scared of him.

to her house.

ADELAIDE

But I believed you. Right from the very first second,
how Stops by her door.

did I believe you?6 Unless it was right. That I knew, even
then, I knew my place in time. That I should die.
And as she turns to look back at

him.

MOTION.

THE DOCTOR

Adelaide. I've done it before. In small ways. Saved some

little people. But never someone as important as you.

Oh, THE DOCTOR, still watching her, in the
snow, standing tall, so

so proud. Unstoppable.

I'm good!

in slow motion, she turns to her door.

6 When the Doctor and Adelaide meet on board Bowie Base One, he gives her his word that she can trust him: 'And 40 million miles away from home, my word is all you've got.' She looks at him, and somehow she does trust him...

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TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

old, familiar song.

As she steps inside, just a glimpse of...

looks up...

She's taking her gun out of her pocket.

good distance away...

The door closes.

CUT TO the Doctor. Still in slow motion, he turns away from the
by snow and Ood-song. An OOD. Ood Sigma. Surrounded

house, to walk back to the Tardis. In the snow, and the night,

at him.

in perfect command.

And then REAL TIME SLAMS BACK IN, as -

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

gone too far.

Bang!

Sigma just stares at him.

From the house. A flare of gunfire in a darkened window.

Doctor stands. Calls out:

Then silence.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

On the Doctor - CU, slam into FLASHBACKS, as in sc.12 -
time? Is this it? My death? Is it

FLASHBACK: the photo of Adelaide, unchanged. Slam into the

date

A flurry of snow, and...

of death, unchanged: 2059.

Ood has gone. No one there.

Intercut with CU Doctor, his horror -

Doctor recovering.

FLASHBACK: headlines, Mystery of Location... Alien Intervention?

back at the house. So sorry.

Then -

Daughter pledges to continue her work. Then -

Then walks to the

Tardis, head bowed.

A photo of a proud, strong woman, looking skyward. Susie
Fontana Steps inside.

Brooke. First Lightspeed Ship. Proud heritage.

the grind of ancient engines, and the Tardis melts away,

Time slamming back into
place. into
the snow and the dark...

The Doctor,
defeated.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2009 23:43:14 GMT

FROM:

Hold on him: shattered, all this sudden arrogance draining
away. **RE: LIFE ON MARS**

He's collapsing inside. Sinks to his
knees. The new ending
is loved. I'm chuffed to bits with it. That's as dark as we'll ever go!

I love the worry. Drama should make you anxious, and push things to the limit.

CO on him. His grief.

a worry that we'll have to get this past BBC Editorial Policy - and every word

Music, filling this moment. Haunting, soaring.
anyone says anywhere is now the source of twitching at the BBC -- but that's a
gradually,

Bu

realise...

fight

that I'm ready to face. In fairness, Editorial Policy has always been massively

of us, right from the very first day.

The Doctor can hear this.

I did think of that ending yesterday, in the afternoon, mid-rewrite, but I

It's

a

song.

PT

it out of the way, because I could only see it literally - the gun, at Adelaide's

bang, blood, splat, on the Doctor, yikes. I thought, what, cut to a wide shot

7 In Scene 12, the Doctor sees flashbacks depicting newspaper reports of the deaths of Adelaide and her crew.
(Headline:

that it's not too grisly? What happens to the body? Outside her daughter's house

'Mars

Disaster.'

Smaller

headline:

'Bowie

Base

One

Destroyed.

World

in

Mourning.')

- does the daughter come running out?

Impossible. But then I woke up this morning,

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TWENTY-TWO: GUNS DON'T KILL PEOPLE, TIME LORDS DO

So, I'm happy. And the Planet of the Dead read-through is tomorrow. Michelle Ryan

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2009 23:55:05 GMTphoned me up tonight. She's lovely. And there's a chance, just a chance, that we might

get Lee Evans to play Malcolm, UNIT's scientific adviser! But now I've got to do
Pink **RE: MATT SMITH**Pages to allow for the wrecked bus. I suppose this
will be the first and last time that I Ah, Matt sounds lovely. That makes
everyone's jobs easier. Matt has phoned Piers, too,have to rewrite for a damaged
double-decker. and said that he loved the
interview - so job well done.

message from: Russell

I think I am in love. Julie's mum has just died, this morning. Christ. Oh, bless her.

Text

Sent:

19-Jan-2009 12:09

RE:

MATT

SMITH

Oh no! Isn't

that incredibly sudden? How dreadful. Poor Julie. Please

pass

on my condolences. Will anyone be able to persuade her to take

You're fickle! David is weeping. But you can't leave me on that cliffhanger! Oh,

some

days off work?

you have.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2009 21:07:25 GMT

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY 2009 00:24:52 GMT

RE: MATT SMITH

RE:

MATT SMITH

I'm heading out in a bit, but thought I'd update you on Matt Smith first, because

I've

just got in from the Radio Times Covers Party. Brilliant to see David again, looking

he really was awesome. Chatty, charming, bursting with enthusiasm... the crew will

dapper

and well. (I'm driving back to Cardiff tonight.' 'You're getting driven?' 'No,

love him. He was full of praise for David, too. He knows that he's got big shoes to

no,

I'm driving myself 'You mean you don't get driven?!' 'Not any more. Matt Smith

fill. ('Well, it's lucky I've got big feet,' he said.) He's quite a talker. He kept going for

has

my driver now.' Ha ha.) Freema was there, too, with her boyfriend. Full of smiles.

45 minutes. Sentences ran away with him -- adjective after adjective to describe how

And

Piers was there. And Steven. And Susie. And Neill Gorton. And the boys from

excited he is at being cast. I'm going to try to make my Doctor as varied, and brilliant,

The

Mill. Oh, and Kiefer Sutherland! YES, REALLY!

and dark, and unpredictable, and happy, and sad, and funny as I can -- every facet of

me, really -- and explore it with bravery and courage,' he said. (Phew!) 'I'm going to do

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY 2009 09:58:17 GMT

it my way.' I thought he was about to break into song. And then he did! He sang the

RE:

MATT SMITH

Doctor Who theme at me down the phone! I told him, 'A few weeks ago, you can't have

KIEFER

SUTHERLAND?! Blimey! It's a good party, isn't it? I just realised, I suppose

imagined that you'd be sat in Soho, in Starbucks, singing the Doctor Who theme into

I'll

be in LA next year. Maybe I've had my last Covers Party. That's a bit sad. Mind

your mobile.' He said, 'The thing with this job is, you're constantly faced with these

you,

once Doctor Who is done, I've probably had my last Radio Times cover full stop.

utterly bizarre scenarios.' (At this point, I was tempted to tell him about your double-

David

texted, saying that he was embarrassed at the number of covers he had to pick

decker bus! But I didn't.) up. It's a hard life.

He seems pretty fearless about taking on the role. I asked him whether there's an

inner turbulence. He laughed. 'Yes, it's a facade. I'm putting on an act, because it's still

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY 2009 22:36:26 GMT

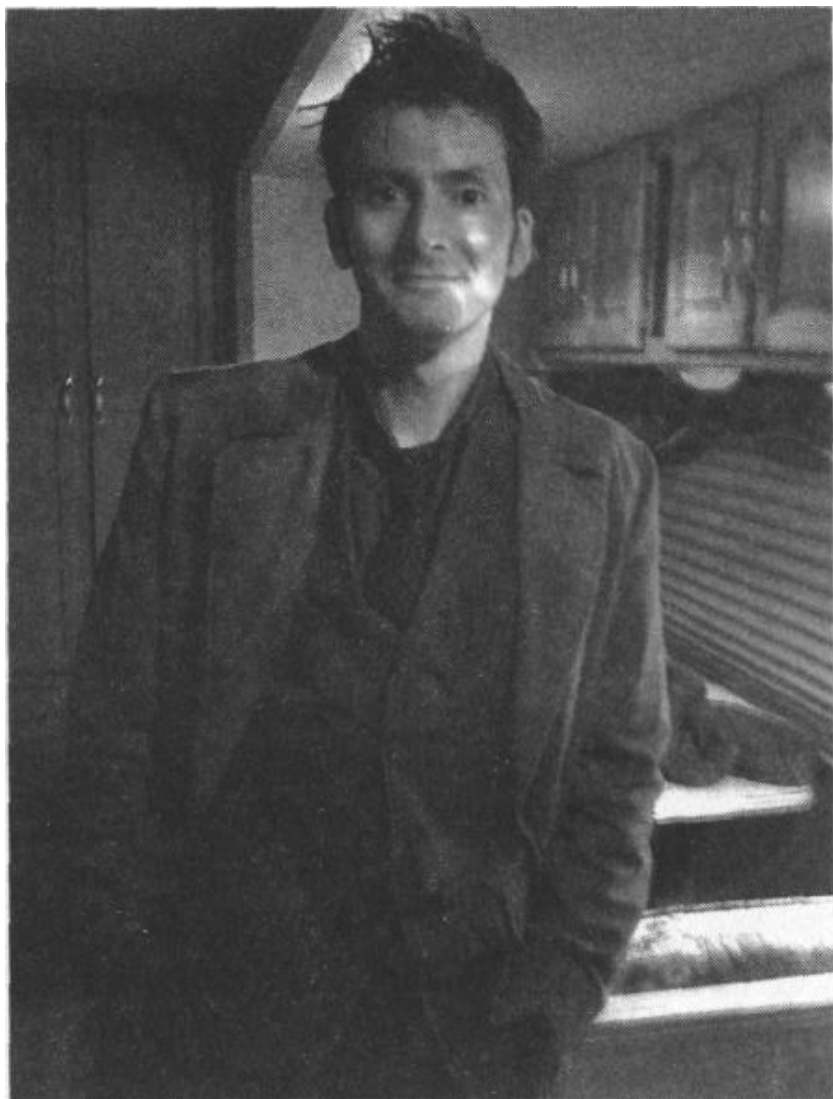
FW: WE'RE BACK!!! X

Ah, look what David has just sent Julie and me from set. He's back!

The 4.15 rushes so far are amazing. Christina stealing the cup is the sort of scene that would be the centrepiece of most dramas; we're just throwing it in as Scene 1! But it's really stylish and glossy. James Strong was such a good choice to direct this.

Meanwhile, Julie is coming back to work tomorrow. Of course she is. It's the Tone Meeting for 4.16, and the world will end before Julie Gardner misses a Tone Meeting. I can't wait to see her. I miss her. Her loss has put everything into perspective. She phoned up just now, as marvellous as ever, crying for her dad, but hooting at all the madness that comes with funerals, like the barmy old aunties and strange funeral directors. I remember when my mum died. It's the size of it, like you're trying to cram a fact that's as huge as a mountain range into your tiny head.

Hey, remember my intention -- it was almost a New Year's resolution -- to not kill myself smoking and slaving into the early hours in writing 4.17/4.18? To write normally, at a measured pace? According to that plan, I have to start TODAY...



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CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE
FOR
GALLIFREY

In which Russell definitely doesn't threaten Lee
Evans,
Benjamin spends the morning in a Portaloo,
and the
Doctor travels to Trinity and beyond

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2009 02:40:08 GMT

EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

Look! 4.17 SCRIPT!!!

I was locked away for a few days. Bit of a slump.
Let's not go there. Dark day or two. But

then I was having a coffee in the Bay this morning,
and I thought of the Woman, the

Woman that Wilf meets in the church...

2. EXT. SHOPPING STREET - NIGHT

CAMERA craning down a huge, outdoor CHRISTMAS TREE...

NARRATOR

To the west of the north, in the season known as Winter,
the citizens of the Human Race did gather, in celebration
of a pagan rite, to banish the cold and the dark.

...craning down to find a SALVATION ARMY BRASS BAND. 'God Rest Ye
Merry Gentlemen'; the most mournful of carols.

Moving round to find a few ONLOOKERS (SHOPPERS in b/g) . People,
just dotted about, pausing. A mother 4 son. Three teenagers. A

PRISON DUNGEON - NIGHT 2

FX: THE MASTER, still suspended in LIGHT. Calmer, strong:

THE MASTER

Lucy. Oh, sweet Lucy Saxon. My ever faithful. Did the widow's kiss bring me back to life?

LUCY

You're killing them.

FX: GOVERNOR & GUARDS either side; still kneeling, LIGHT pouring from their torsos - but they're weaker now, eyes closing, heads lolling, energy being drained from them.

FX: (and REPEAT), the Master within the light -

THE MASTER

Let them die. Oh, let them! They're just the first! The whole stinking stupid Human disgrace can fall into the pit, can't you hear it Lucy?? The noise? The drumming? Louder than ever before, the drums, the drums, the never-ending drums, phhh I have missed them - !

But then...

Lucy Saxon stands. Staring up at him. Brave and clever.

LUCY

But no one knew you better than me. And I knew this would happen, one day, I knew you'd come back. All this time, your disciples were prepared... but so were we.

She turns to the Blonde Guard. Who's on her side! She reaches into her pocket, hands Lucy something...

THE MASTER

...what are you doing?

She's holding a SMALL PHIAL OF AMBER LIQUID. Uncorks it...

family, mum, dad & little daughter...

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**WRITER'S
CHAPTER**

WILF

Never been

cold.

WO

They forgot...

of a convent, back in the thirteen

. This was the site

a demon fell from the sky. Then a man

hundreds. It's said

...then finding WILFRED MOTT.

in a blue box. They called him the sainted

appeared, a man

NARRATOR (CONT'D)

He smote the demon. And then faded away.

physician.

Except for one.

coincidence. Bit of a

Wilf's troubled, uneasy. Turns away.

CUT TO WIDER. Wilf wandering along. Lost in thought. WOMAN

In what way?

And then he hears...

Evensong. Beautiful, high, soaring chords. He looks... (looks back at window) ...I've, just,

that before, that's all.

A CHURCH. In the middle of town. (The Runaway Bride church.)

It's as though the music is drawing him in...

such thing as coincidence. Who knows?

It's said there's no

coming back.

CUT TO:

Perhaps he's

3. INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

WILFRED enters. The vaulted space filled with Evensong.
would make my Christmas -

Ohh, that

A CHOIR, at the altar, dressed in full surplices.
round -

He turns back

Candles all around. The pews are almost empty, just one or two
The woman has gone; like she was never there.

No one there.

PEOPLE, dotted about, in prayer.

back at the stained-glass window.

Wilf chilled. He looks

Wilf looks round. Not sure what he's doing there.

soaring now.

The choir's voices

Then something catches his eye...

blue box...

CLOSER on the glass

To the side: a STAINED-GLASS WINDOW.

He walks closer. Something in the image...
that the opening scenes should be with Wilf, on Earth, at Christmas,

I always knew

presentiments going on, but I couldn't tie it all together... and then I

with strange

At the bottom of the window, to the left: a BLUE BOX. (FX?, image

Woman. Having thought of the Woman, I then had to work out who

thought of the

inlaid?) A simple representation of the Tardis, stained-glass

panels of light radiating from its lamp.
clicked, I was so excited, I all but ran back home. I couldn't wait

she is. When that

keyboard. I typed out that scene in about 20 minutes. Ooh, I like that

to get to the

The Evensong drifts into The Doctor's Theme, as Wilf walks

scene. (Who is

she? You'll see! Ha ha. I'm not 100 per cent certain yet, but I think I can
closer. Staring, entranced, then -

weave it in.) This has
been lovely. I've really enjoyed myself. Plenty of misery to come,

WOMAN I m sure. And the
worry is, when this script turns out to be 500 pages long, this Wilf

sequence is hugely
cut-able. But we'll see.

They call it, the Legend of the Blue Box.

Elsewhere, the 4.15
filming continues to be glorious. The night-time streets and the

He turns. The WOMAN behind him. She's 60, wise, kind. tunnel are lit
like a Michael Mann movie. (The tunnel is huge!) And David is back,

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY

glory be. Everyone says that Michelle is lovely. And today I met Lee Evans. He's a hoot
Oh, and every new writer, every single one of them, describes at least one character- completely mental, and brilliant. He'd brought along comedy false teeth to play
with the phrase 'He doesn't suffer fools gladly.' That seems to be the Number OneMalcolm. We had the barmiest conversation where I talked him out of it. His version to
Character Type. I'm so fed up of reading it. I mentally delete it.the crew, later, was, 'Russell T Davies threatened to beat me up if I wore them!'
»what information should these succinct character sketches impart?«

And Julie is okay. Back at work, of course, but genuinely okay - or as okay as you
It's tempting to say that scripts can exist with no description or stage directions at

can ever be in those circumstances. Loads of us are going to the funeral - me, Phil, Ed,
all. Shakespeare does it! But a script is a working document that will be taken away

David - so it's a bit of a works outing, which keeps making us (and Julie) laugh.
and broken down by 57 different departments, all working very fast. They need a

thumbnail.

'Wise' and 'kind' can also be applied to the Woman's clothes (Wardrobe),FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2009 08:04:06 GMT
her hairstyle (Make-Up), any props that she may use (Design), to the actress herselfRE: **EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS**
(Casting) and, for the director, to the overall feel of the piece. Louise Page, and BabsSo, who's the Narrator? I want to know! (Don't tell me.) I reckon it's a Time Lord,
Southcott, and Ed Thomas will all be scribbling notes in their books, and I bet they

will
all write down 'woman, wise, kind'. It simply enables work to be faster. From thenmaybe the President, but only because I know they're turning up at the top of the next

on
in the script, it's up to the writer to introduce some subtlety. The three
adjectivesepisode. And who's the Woman? No idea. None at all. I'm stumped. I presume she

are
only a starting point. After that, it's up to me to find variation. Also, comingpops up again. This is very exciting.

back

to that teamwork thing... if you don't describe a character, then you're into the

Interesting that you describe the Woman, simply, as '60, wise, kind' -- says it all,

whole

Second Coming red eyes/white eyes thing. The possibility of something being I guess. Well, says enough. When you introduce new characters, you offer scant

interpreted

57 dozen different ways. If you look only at the Woman's opening scene, information about them in the stage directions. Astrid in Voyage of the Damned was

then

you could describe her as.... well, 'enigmatic', maybe 'spooky', 'prying' even. a 'waitress in uniform', and 'young, bright, feisty'. Midshipman Frame was 'young,

Everyone

starts getting a slightly different picture, and that's not good. nervous'. Adelaide in 4.16 is 'strong, wry, 60'. And your mysterious Woman is '60,

As

ever, that's just my way of working. I remember learning that off Paul Abbott, readingwise, kind', and no more. Why do you resist filling in further details? Is it so that you

his

scripts and thinking, 'Oh, I like that.' But there are lots of different ways of doing it. don't restrict casting directors? Or because characters should speak for themselves,

Some

writers like to think of a nice, shiny quip to introduce someone. 'JONATHAN through their behaviour and dialogue? Or is it just to keep the script tidy? What

enters.

He's a simple bloke, the sort of man who's happy if he finds a big crisp.' Actually, information should these succinct character sketches impart? that's quite good! But personally I find that a bit trying and twee in a script. You can

almost

hear the writer too much. If you're introducing, say, seven characters, that can get

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2009 11:26:06 GMT

quite

wearing - and, frankly, you're not going to find seven lines that good!

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

Yes, it's partly to keep the script tidy, concise and clear. That's a big factor. Never

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 24 JANUARY 2009

16:08:29 GMT

forget that these things are designed to be read, and there is nothing more annoying

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

than lengthy descriptions. If a paragraph says, 'Midshipman Frame is young, nervous, Eight pages more, and I only started at midday. I'm a-rattling through this. (I will

from a humble family background, and yet clever enough to have escaped his modest come unstuck, fear not.) See my new plan in action! At least five pages a day, but no

two-up-two-down hovel on Sto, and to have graduated into the Fleet; he chews his late nights, just steady work. I'm stopping now. No more work for Saturday. Christ, if

fingernails, is allergic to runner beans, and lost his virginity to Admiral Bones at the age I can keep this up, that's like a whole new life! (Although, maybe I just packed a whole

of 17,' then it makes the script unreadable, in my opinion. (Apart from the virginity day and night's worth of coffee and cigarettes into one afternoon. This is debatable.)

bit. I like that.) What's important is what's happening in the scenes that he's in, why It's all a bit steeped-in-the-past, the stuff on the Ood's home planet, with the Doctor

Frame exists, his relationship with Captain Hardaker, and whether he will survive the telling them - and reminding us - what happened with the Master in the Series Three

crisis that you know is coming. Equally, what's important in the Woman's first scene finale, and the Ood showing the Doctor that 'part of him survived' in the ring... but

is what she says to Wilf, how she says it ('wise' and 'kind' -- that's important), and the I think I'm telling the backstory well enough to be entertaining. It's nice and doom-y,

mystery of who she is and what she's doing there. New scriptwriters often give you I think. If you're bringing back the Master, what else can you do? And the Elder Ood,

these long paragraphs of description, and while it's each to his own and all that, I really swathed in white robes, is great fun!

would stick to three adjectives. It's brief, concise, and accurate.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 25 JANUARY 2009 18:09:14 GMT

red salmon sandwiches (so much better than real salmon), sausage rolls, VictoriaRE: **EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS**

and the battle of the cakes - between Julie's rock cakes and Auntie Eileen's. IHa, look at me, sticking to my principles! Seven more pages. One afternoon's work. Evening preferred Auntie Eileen's. Julie is probably baking again now, determined to win. Ofoff! (Dancing On Ice! So shoot me.) I'm typing, and I'm happy. I'm actually smiling away. course, in no time at all, people were crowding in for photos and autographs with

- which he handled so magnificently. And there were so many people from theMind you, this script does show all the problems of the transmission pattern. This is

there, you could see how extraordinary Julie is. Evelyn May Gardner. As Edstrong stuff for Christmas Day. We've got the equivalent of a Black Mass on BBC One on

'What a beautiful name.'25 December. I've written around it where I can. Where Lucy Saxon should give blood

to resurrect the Master, a small square of tissue is placed against her lips instead, gentle,

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY 2009 16:34:50 GMTlike a kiss. 'You were Saxon's wife. You bore his imprint. That's all we needed, the final

EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMSingredient...' I call it 'the Widow's Kiss'. Where she was going to use a gun or a dagger to

script! Evening off now. And I'm still loving it. It's like the problems just solvetry to halt the Master's resurrection, it's a small phial of amber liquid. 'The Secret Books

in front of my eyes. This is so strange. I am disconcerted. Of course, theof Saxon spoke of the Chemicals of Life. And I was never that bright, but... there were

Wells scene is outrageously indulgent. It might well be cut when this script ispeople clever enough to calculate their opposite.' Even the Saxon disciples aren't quite

long. But I couldn't resist...chanting 'He is risen' and all that. But it's still tricky. It's Christmas! Frankly, Ben, the

Master and the businessman in a public toilet ain't looking too good right now. 37. EXT. PRISON - DAY^

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 25 JANUARY 2009 20:50:23 GMT
CU on THE DOCTOR, running out of the TARDIS, frantic -

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS
DAYLIGHT!

Have you watched EastEnders on Christmas Day ever? Those episodes are some of the

darkest, most depressing things on telly all year. Two Christmases ago, Pauline Fowler
It hits him. He stops dead, stunned.

died cold, alone, and despised.1 On Christmas Day! The Master killing someone in a

time of day!

toilet doesn't seem that bad, comparatively.

looks down...

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 27 JANUARY 2009 23:48:29 GMT

standing by a burnt, battered sign, on the ground.

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

Ah, sad day. It was Julie's mum's funeral. Although, as funerals go, that was as lovely
HMP BROADFELL.

as it could be. Strange to say, but we all had a good day out. Me, Phil and David all

turns, looks round behind him...

packed into Ed Thomas' car. (Ed was so concerned about getting there on time, he did

a dry run to Julie's house last night. He's got a pregnant wife to get home to, but no, he
FX: DMP WIDE SHOT, the PRISON. Destroyed.
The high outer walls

drove for an hour up the valleys for a dry run. I've never loved that man more!)
When have fallen, the building beyond a charred,

gutted ruin. No

you get to her village, you realise that it's such a tiny, tight community, there's
no way flames, no smoke; it burnt out days ago.

her dad is going to be alone. He looked well; Julie looked wonderful. Not in
denial, He missed it.

not in despair, but in that true and honest state of sadness.

The crematorium was packed. At least 200 people. They had to crowd
outside. I FX: REPEAT DMP, the Doctor a
small figure, as he wanders into

or egr ound, agai nst t he r ui n. Knowi ng i t ' s not over . Hol d on

realised how modest Julie is about her family. They don't just live in the valleys;
they're

s, t he empti ness - l ong dur ati on FX shot , because t hen, FX

Kings of the Valley. And all so proud of her. The Welsh sang like heroes. Hooray
for shot continued, as -

the Welsh! Julie spoke at the service, a speech that was, literally, perfect - about
how

beautiful her mum was. Oh, it was sad. And then it was back to the house for
tinned Scenes 37 and 38, which immediately follow the
Master's explosive resurrection in the dungeon of HMP Broadfell (Scene

were deleted even before the first draft was delivered, for being, as Russell says later, 'indulgent, and also
shit'. Scenes 39

41 - in which millionaire businessman Joshua Naismith and his daughter, 'Alice' (renamed Abigail in later
drafts), watch

1 Pauline Fowler (nee Beale} - played by Wendy Richard - was a character in EastEnders from the
show's inception in 1985 to footage of the prison burning and the Master's escape - were left in.

her death in 2006.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE CHAPTER TWENTY-
THREE: FOR GALLIFREY

TRINITY WELLS, the American Newsreader, now roving
reporter, THE DOCTOR
steps into frame, foreground! Talking to CAMERA. And no
one survived? I mean, they looked, they
checked..?

TRINITY WELLS
And the mystery remains. With no survivors from
Broadfell TRINITY WELLS

Prison, we may never know Lucy Saxon's final secret, and That's the official
story.

what part she played in Harold Saxon's so-called reign

f.

o.. THE
DOCTOR

(to cameraman) And the unofficial?

Sorry, we got a problem?

TRINITY
WELLS

CUT TO REVERSE - a wide stretch of tarmac,, once the prison Well. You
shouldn't listen to the internet. But it's

car park, now abandoned, with ordinary houses way beyond. The said, the
security cameras kept running. That they saw

AMERICAN CAMERAMAN lowering his camera. something.
Next thing you know, all the tapes have gone.

Not just wiped.
Disappeared.

CAMERAMAN

We got something in shot. That's weird, that box thing,
it THE DOCTOR

wasn't there before. What sort of
something?

Trinity turning. The Doctor seeing her, walking over -
TRINITY WELLS

Someone running. Out of

the flames.

TRINITY WELLS

Hey, d'you mind? We're filming. Is that wooden
thing CUT TO:

yours?

39. INT. NAISMITH'S HALL

- DAY CU the STOCK

THE DOCTOR

Never seen it before, but... hold on, hello! Don't I know FOOTAGE of the
BURNING BUILDING.

you?

Now being watched by

JOSHUA NAISMITH. The playback on a terminal,

TRINITY WELLS on a smart desk, with
the huge, stately-home dining hall behind

No, I get that a lot, you've just seen me on TV. Most him, all stark & bare
elegance.

people are surprised I've even got legs.

ALICE NAISMITH walking

towards him. Echoing footsteps.

THE DOCTOR

Trinity Wells! Brilliant! So tell me, Trinity Wells...
the ALICE

prison. What happened? Did you find
anything?

CUT

TO: NAISMITH

I think we might be in
luck, darling. Take a look at

38. EXT. PRISON CAR PARK - DAY this...

CU STOCK FOOTAGE of a BURNING BUILDING, playing on monitor. On screen -

CUT TO WIDER: TRINITY & CAMERAMAN inside their American TV
van CUT TO:

- all playback equipment & gear, etc. A van with a sliding door

on one side. THE DOCTOR outside, looking in. 40. EXT. FIRE -
NIGHT

TRINITY WELLS

SCREEN filled with

FIRE. And foreground, a FIGURE, A SHADOW, just

They say there was something strange about the fire. It a glimpse, a blur,
rushes past -

burnt for days, way beyond anything natural. Poor Lucy

Saxon, that's hell of a life. Married to a madman,
and CUT TO:

then this.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY

41. INT. NAISMITH'S HALL -
DAY THE
DOCTOR

What does he
do?

NAISMITH & ALICE studying the image.

On screen, grabbed pauses of the fleeting
FIGURE. Everything!

NAISMITH
WELLS

Y'know how
you get your Bill Gates and Steve Jobs and Henry

That's all we've got. But I think it's enough to give us Van
Stattens, those people running the world?3 Like it's

hope. said they're
the front-men, while the real masterminds

sit behind
them, in billionaire cabals? That's Joshua

ALICE Naismith.
No one knows anything about him. I was trying to

It really would be the most superlative Christmas get an
interview, but no chance.

present.

DOCTOR

NAISMITH ...okay.
Joshua Naismith.

You just leave it to
Daddy. (big smile)

Thanks then,
Trinity! Mike!

All smiling & kittenish, she kisses the top of his head.

WELLS

CUT TO:

said your name. Never even

42. EXT. DOCKLANDS/WASTELAND -

DAY THE DOCTOR

Doctor. Bye bye! I'm the

Old industrial setting, disused docklands, open wasteland

beyond. The TV van pulls up - as THE DOCTOR is hopping out, with He

heads off.

TRINITY WELLS & CAMERAMAN all in the front -

Searching. Keen. But behind him, the van doesn't move. Head up.

TRINITY WELLS Trinity steps

out.

Funny place to stop.

WELLS

THE DOCTOR Doctor?

Naah, it just smells right - thanks for the lift -

whoops - He turns round.

Good distance between them. Quiet, scared:

He's knocked some papers onto the floor, picks them up -

TRINITY WELLS (CONT'D)

Are we safe?

One of them is a b&w photo of Joshua Naismith.

DOCTOR

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D) ...what

d'you mean?

Ah. Now. Hold on, who's he?

WELLS

TRINITY WELLS I keep

getting these dreams. Dreams I can't remember. Past

Joshua Naismith. few years,

there's been enough stories about the end of

this time... Feels different. the world, but

THE DOCTOR

Never heard of
him. THE DOCTOR
What's that
got to do with me?

TRINITY WELLS

That's just the way he likes it. Billionaire, and that's a
conservative estimate.

3

and Steve Jobs (co-founder of Apple) are real-life American business

Although Bill Gates (co-founder of Microsoft)

billionaire that the Ninth Doctor and Rose encounter in Doctor Who 1.6.

Magnates, Henry Van Statten is the fictional

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY

TRINITY WELLS

I'm a good journalist. I've heard that name before.
The eating a tramp and a rent boy on Christmas Eve.⁴
Come on! That's not bad!

Doctor. That's
all I can do for today. I have to go to Upper Boat, because we've tests on
(silence) the
Tritovores in Planet of the Dead - all at night, because the crew is on night-shoot
Are we
safe? hours.⁵
Meanwhile, I'm in a mild state of terror, because my back is starting to go. It

THE

DOCTOR starts with twinges, like bubbles
rising. Then these little spasms, like warning signs.
Oh
God, please, no, shit, shit, shit. It is bloody awful to sit and type with a bad back. I
don't
know. That's the
last thing I need. There's nothing I can do to fight it off, except sit here, very,
Silence. very
still. I look like a posh secretary, all poised.

TRINITY

WELLS
THURSDAY 29 JANUARY 2009 23:33:57 GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,

You take care, now. Take care for all of
us.

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

*Planet
of the Dead is cursed. David has lost his voice! It's weird, he feels fine, no cold,*

And she turns,
goes. it's just... gone. You
can hear it fading away at the end of last night's rushes. So, we've

changed
tonight's scenes, cut tomorrow in half so that we can get back onto day shoots

The Doctor turns, with a mission. Heads for the wasteland.

and
give him a proper weekend off. But for an actor, that's terrifying.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 28 JANUARY 2009 19:05:04 GMT

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2009 18:32:15 GMT
RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

RE:

EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMSUm... what's American newsreader Trinity Wells doing in the UK? Really?!

Are

you okay? How's your back? (And what about David's voice?!)

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 29 JANUARY 2009 01:22:07 GMT

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2009 18:59:29 GMT

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

RE:

EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

I've just been forwarded this e-mail from Jane Tranter in LA. It's from Bob Harris, the

I've

spent the last two days lying on the floor to fix my back. It's hard to watch TV,

man who wrote that Prisoner of Trebekistan book that we mention in The Writer's Tale

lying

on your back. But I think it's worked! Sort of. A bit. More later! I'm mid rewrite

-- *and he's read our book! Completely by coincidence! He writes:*

on

4.16... P.S. David's voice is holding up. Fingers crossed.

So I'm eagerly reading The Writer's Tale, since of course I'm a fan, and before I've

barely started, there you are praising my book Prisoner of Trebekistan, right there

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2009 03:52:14 GMT

in the very beginning. I had to look at it more than once, doing a cartoon-like rapid

RE:

EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

shake of the head, to be sure I was seeing that right. I'm so pleased you enjoyed the

Here's

the new 4.16. That was more work than I thought. I had to lose 100 + FX days

book, as in 'Hey, wow, Jane, come look at this!.'followed by a small bit of dancing and

and
seven pages... Actually, the trickiest bit was Adelaide's gun. I was going to show

repeating what you wrote aloud a couple of times. Thank you so much for the kind it firing some sort of laser in the corridor scenes, so that we know what's happened

words. I may quote them to total strangers in cafes. later when she shoots herself with it. But I haven't. It made it worse. If you see any sort

How lovely is that? His wife is Jane Espenson, who's a writer and co-exec on Buffy or laser-whatever coming out of the gun, then you later imagine that going through

and Battlestar Galactica. She's a brilliant writer! He goes on to say: 'There are so many Adelaide's head at the end of the episode. It was horrible. I think it works by making

moments in your book that feel like bits of conversations that Jane and I have almost the gun a blue-metal, then the flash is blue, tying it in. And it's obvious, anyway. But

daily. It's really cool to see that someone you admire has some of the same struggles, we'll have to work hard on the bang noise, so that it's more of a zap.

even a continent away.'

4

On some urban wasteland, the Master -ma dirty hoodie, pale-faced, wild-eyed, hair dyed punk-white - murders two

homeless

people, Tommo (late 40s, wry) and Ginger (18, quiet, northern), turning them to skeletons. 'Dinnertiiiiime!!!!'

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 29 JANUARY 2009 16:13:44

GMT 5 In Doctor Who 4.15, the Doctor and Christina encounter the Tritovores, humanoid fly-like creatures, on the desert planet of

San

Helicoc.

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

Well, you haven't got a businessman in a toilet -- it just delayed the action, sorry, it's

faster to find the Master after that - but instead my Christmas gift to you is the Master

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2009 01:14:59

GMT Doctor is, when he's trying to be a lonesome stranger.⁶ But I knew you'd fix
it.**RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD**

DREAMS A question: when to cut, and when not to cut... ? Editing down, down, down almost I've only been pottering on 4.17 tonight. I needed to reduce the page count. I got rid always improves a script, but when is a cut a cut too far? of a lot of that Trinity Wells stuff. It was so indulgent, and also shit. And I should have

introduced the Immortality Gate earlier, so I inserted a scene with Naismith and Alice
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2009 02:18:20 GMT

in the 'Gate Room'. It comes immediately after his 'You just leave it to Daddy' line
in **RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS** Scene 41. Now, after Naismith kisses the top of Alice's head, I have them both walking Yes, cutting is good. Cut, cut, cut. Of course, that doesn't mean that everything cantowards a set of double doors, and then... go. With Doctor Who, usually I find myself fighting like hell to cut anything, except a

good
joke. Jokes are often first to be chuckled overboard, but they're not just accidental

42. INT. THE GATE ROOM -
DAY gags; they're vital to the whole
tone of the show. They're not flippant. Or rather, they

are
flippant, but that flippancy is intrinsic to the Doctor. On Battlestar Galactica, it's

JOSHUA & ALICE NAISMITH enter.

probably
the opposite - if a joke slips in there, I suspect it's the first thing to go - but

A huge, long, elegant room - all French windows, red velvet
that's because both shows have different aims. Other than being sci-fi, they're barely

curtains, busts on plinths, oil paintings; a stately home with
connected at all. This is something that so few sci-fi fans understand. Saying that

a gleaming SCI-FI LABORATORY built inside it. COMPUTER BANKS

*Battlestar
Galactica is better than Doctor Who is as stupid as saying that Maths is better*

& TERMINALS; to one side, TWO GLASS-WALLED BOOTHS. TECHNICIANS

tending to the controls. Minimal Christmas decorations,

just than English. But then I think saying that Coronation Street is better than EastEnders

one, classy tree. At the far end... is stupid, because they're such very different shows. Maybe I think about this stuff too much.

THE IMMORTALITY GATE.

cutting isn't just about trimming the spare lines (because you could argue that So,

A huge, dark-metal, rectangular frame, bristling with technology, jokes are going spare); it's about trimming away the stuff that isn't vital to the essence

as wide and as high as possible. Three sides to the frame, left, of the whole thing, not just the plot. Most cuts are simple, because they involve right and top, with the left and right sides disappearing into

getting rid of ping-pong dialogue. All that back-and-forth between the Doctor and the floor, i.e. no bottom frame.

Trinity Wells can be reduced to - what? - a couple of extra lines in Naismith's opening

NAISMITH exchange with Alice:

Ladies and gentlemen. It seems help is at hand. And it falls upon me to be somewhat Dickensian by announcing, NAISMITH with no regrets whatsoever, that Christmas is cancelled. I think we might be in luck, darling. It's the footage from

Prepare the Gate! Broadfell Prison. The night it burnt down. Take a look at

this...

Technicians - not complaining - press buttons, hum of power -

FX: FLICKERS OF BLUE ELECTRICITY across the GATE. Tile up - That's enough, isn't it? A couple of pages reduced to 'It's the footage from Broadfell

Prison. The night it burnt down.' Perfect. It's never quite as straightforward as I've

FX: DMP WIDER SHOT OF THE ROOM & ROOF, showing the flickering made it appear, but it's one of the most important things

you can do to a script - pare

Gate set beneath a WIDE, ELEGANT, CIRCULAR, DOMED WINDOW set in
the ceiling. Sunlight streaming in.

right down to the bone, but keeping the jokes.

think what I'm saying is, cutting doesn't simply mean drawing a line through

Alice snuggles up to Naismith; admiring their
empire. speeches. That's the easy bit. It means being ruthless
and concise in your approach

every line, every scene, every character. You have to keep your mind as tight as a

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 3 FEBRUARY 2009 01:38:11 GMT

Because a commission is lucky. If you get asked to write an hour's TV, you're the

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

'Silver Cloak' gang is Wilf's posse of pensioner mates - including Oliver Barnes (65), Minnie Hooper (70). Winston

I'm glad that you cut poor Trinity. When Wilf's 'Silver Cloak' gang shows up
(in Katusi (70), and half-a-dozen others. They help Wilf track down the TARDIS. leading them to the Doctor.
'It's Important!' Wilf tells

'We've got to find it! Phone around, phone everyone - Sally, phone the Bridge Club. Winston, try the Old Boys, Bobby,

a Sunshine Coach - ha ha!), it starts to feel like everyone on Earth knows who
the get on to the skiffle band - between us. we've got this city covered!'

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TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY**DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE**

bastard in the world, and you shouldn't waste a single eighth of a page
with Hush, you old misery. Come on, Doctor! Big smile! Thaaat's

ping-pong, or flim-flam, or ornate curlicues, or lengthy descriptions of a man's
jumper. it!

You must make every word
count.

it flash?FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2009 02:37:59 GMT

EVERYONE **HAD** **BAD**
DREAMS No, do it again.
Smile!More! I feel like I've waited all year to write that dialogue between the
Doctor and

on the wasteland -- the old man tracking down the Time Lord to the lost and

think the battery's gone.lonely edge of a city. It's about 1,000 pages long, but I can't
bear to cut a word of it. I

(Yes, despite what I said last night about editing your own work!) Oh, and here I
am MINNIEback on night hours again. I
just couldn't write that scene in daytime. I sat here doing

there's a blue light, try again.nothing for hours. No,

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2009 03:06:41
GMT Try mine, use this one -

RE: **EVERYONE** **HAD** **BAD**
DREAMS

The 'Silver Cloak' gang continues to be brilliant! Especially Minnie. (Wilf: 'Be on
the

lookout for a police box. Exactly like the old ones.' Minnie: 'I got locked inside
one No, it's working, just press the button on top.

of them, August Bank Holiday 1962.' Winston: 'Were you misbehaving, Minnie?'

DOCTOR

Minnie: 'I certainly was! Wa-hey!') But surely this exchange is inspired by our book tour, I'm really kind of busy, y'know..? or your horrible day at the Cardiff Bay Doctor Who Exhibition back in October...

IL
W F

Won't
take a tick! Just keep smiling! Eyes and teeth! It is an honour to meet you again, sir.

DOCTOR

The Doctor can't help smiling, salutes back. Then: Is that your hand, Minnie?

MINNIE

Ooh, but you never said he was a looker, he's gorgeous, Good boy!

take a photo!

She gives her mobile to Oliver -

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2009 03:11:01 GMT

OLIVER RE:

EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

Not bad, is he? Me next! I have no idea what you mean. I imagined the whole thing. Ha ha ha. Just think how

- and Minnie scuttles to the Doctor's side, all the old folk,

often
David gets that in real life.

except Wilf, gathering around him. He's trapped!

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2009 01:55:49 GMT

MINNIE

RE:
EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

I'm Minnie. Minnie the Menace. It's been a long time since I had a photo with a handsome man! Well, that was a pissy night.

Something's going wrong with my screenwriter software. I put
loads
of changes into 4.16, went to close it, and mysterious screens came up, 'SAVING
WILF 0%'
, with a bar that was obviously meant to go from 0 to 100%. Except it stayed on 0.
Now get off him, leave him alone -
And it froze the screen. I had to turn off the
computer and lose it. Turned it back on,
made
all the changes again, went to save... strange little box saying 'APPLICATION
ERROR'
popped up, closed down the software, all changes lost, (cont p589)

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DOCTOR

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S

TALE

TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY

(CONT'D) JOSHUA NAISMITH

almost rather beautiful.

Russell's first draft of The End of Time Part One features this extended

Naismith, he looks through them.

She passes them to

version of Naismith and the Master's first scene together, written on 10

FX: His POV: the SKELETON

Master. Grinning. February 2009...

MASTER

66. INT. NAISMITH'S HALL - DAY

need feeding, don't you think?

JOSHUA NAISMITH strides in, all energy, ALICE following.

NAISMITH

think we can help. If you help me, Mr Saxon.

My family made its fortune out of wax. Came to England in

the year 1890, not a penny to their names, didn't even

MASTER

need passports back then. Started work in service, good,

name is the Master.

honest work. But my grandfather... he noticed the wax.

Reveal, THE MASTER.

refuse to call anyone that. But you've my daughter to

She heard rumours of Harold Saxon. His disciples.

Tied to an upright trolley, Hannibal Lecter-style. Bound by

return. Sort of thing she finds rather thrilling.

leather straps. Strap across his mouth. ARMED GUARDS & MR FINCH.1

In the middle of the empty, echoing room.

I was right. He's back!

NAISMITH (CONT'D)

The kitchen maids used to rub wax into their hands. Stop

MASTER

the knuckles from splitting. Nothing inore than a simple

am I, a Christmas present?

convenience, but my grandfather saw a business! He sold
that wax. Began the fortune. And that's remained a family

trait, the eye for opportunity. I imagine you're the same;

exactly what I said! Oh, this is going to be

that you'd take the first opportunity to kill me.

Mr Finch, is the Gate ready?

The Master nods, grunts 'Oh-huh.'

FINCH

much so, ma'am.

NAISMITH (CONT'D)

If you would, Mr Finch.

bastard. (Oh, the exciting life of a writer.) I'm going to leave it for tonight, and

Mr Finch releases the mouth-strap,

that it'll just fix itself overnight. Like they do.

THE

MASTER
because your grand plan has been wrecked! BBC One has said

I was changing 4.16

I'm

starving.

to three episodes at Christmas. It's the scheduling of 4.16 on the Saturday before

that they don't like. They say that it's confused, and doesn't work. Hand on

ALICE

Ohh, but look at him!

they have a point. It's hard to get across that episodes presence. Plus, they really

a Doctor Who hit before Christmas, some time in the autumn, though they can't

She's holding a rectangle of polaroid glass up to her eyes,
the fix a date yet - and they've
promised to protect it from The XFactor, somehow. So, now

lenses on a gold stick, like pince-nez.

have to un-Christmas Mars, which is easy enough... though not when you lose your

FX: HER POV: the SKELETON & BULGING EYES Master.

twice.

they said that the Christmas Day/New Year's Day transmission of

1 'Mr Finch' (described as '50, thin, haughty, dry') is Naismith's valet/
butler. In later drafts, the name is changed to Mr Danes

and he's '28, coot, handsome, cruel'
instead. 4.17

and 4.18 is '80 per cent fixed', though they are interested in showing both on

Day. That's your original plan! That's fascinating, and I wouldn't mind at all.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY			

My only worry is that when dates start shifting, they become inherently shiftable, and until I'd cut it down to 45 pages. Good work! I keep hoping I'll finish it this week. Prepat the last minute you end up with something rubbish like Christmas Day and, say, 28 starts - on both episodes! - on 23 February, and I'm really trying to get there, because December, whenever that is. You're never quite sure where you stand with schedulers. this is going to need a hell of a lot of prep. They keep saying things like, 'We're lacking big movies this Christmas, so we need Meanwhile, the Planet of the Dead rushes coming from Upper Boat are tremendous. *Doctor Who to be our big hitter.*' Nice, fine, complimentary... but that doesn't square They did the bus flying yesterday -- which was only a camera swinging about on awith showing both episodes on Christmas Day, because that's not Big Movie Day. You stationary bus, obviously, but it really looks like they're flying. And you're off to Dubai insee? Shifting sands. That's vaguely disquieting. the morning! The Confidential team is out there already. Apparently, it's colder than they

But they did finally -- finally -- agree to the five-night Torchwood. This was, thought. They're all wishing they'd taken jumpers. One story that you should follow up supposedly, written in stone from the moment that it was commissioned, but no, just out there is Mike Jones, the editor. He's going so that he can assemble each day's rushes as I suspected, they've since been talking about shifting it all over the place. Julie went (on his laptop!), because once they've got a rough assembly, they know if they need toin, and fought like a demon. Thank God. pick up shots or reshoot anything, instead of waiting until they get back to Cardiff, by

which time it's too late. The funny thing is, Mike does it overnight. He'll be locked away FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2009 01:27:04 GMT in his hotel room, working like a mad thing, pulling it all together. It could be a good RE: **EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS** story, you newshound. Mike has been with us since Series One. He did more to get that

very first block made than any man will ever know. There we go. More 4.17. It feels like ages since I wrote more. I've reached the big

Have fun, Ben. Safe journey turning point -- the bit where Naismith's private security troops abseil in and grab

the Master, hauling him up into the air and disappearing into the night, leaving the

Text message from: Ben Doctor on the wasteland, unconscious.

10-Feb-2008 19:45 Sent:

Hey, when are you off to Dubai? With everyone else on Tuesday morning? I want

Arrived

safely in Dubai a few minutes ago.constant updates.

message from: Russell

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2009 01:38:21 GMT

Sent:

10-Feb-2008 19:47 Behave now. No

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS drugs or infidelity.

Yes, Tuesday morning. You're going to be writing while I'm in Dubai, aren't you? You're going to be sending me script each day, and I'm not going to be able to read it until

I FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2009 22:51:02 GMT

get back to the UK! NOOOOOOOO!!! I'll have some e-mail access out there, on my **DUBAI**

iPhone, but I can't open script attachments. Bollocks. Okay, so as I understand it... David's minibus got stopped by scary police, and they

all

had to get off and stand on a verge, in the dark, while the driver was fined. While

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2009 01:11:02 GMT

Julian's

bus is lost.7 In the desert. Right now. It's going well. Which bus are you on?!

RE: EVERYONE HAD BAD DREAMS

Here's more. Not much more, though. It's at a weird stage, now that the action has

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2009 23:36:24 GMT

moved to Naismith's mansion; it's practically the start of a new adventure. It takes a **RE: DUBAI**

lot of time, getting the building blocks into place. When there's a new plot, or a new Don't panic. There were three minibuses. One of them was lost in the desert (it took a

character, or a new tone, it takes time to sink in, to get a grip on it, to make myself wrong turning and headed for Oman), and one was pulled over by armed police, but

believe it. I've been here all day - I haven't even been out for milk or papers - just I was on the third minibus. Score! We were the first to arrive at the hotel. Obviously,

pottering about, making myself believe what's happening next. Finding confidence in we were worried sick about the other two minibuses. Almost too worried to tuck into

it. I think I'm there. It just takes time.

I reached Page 48, and shivered at how much action there is to come, so I went right back to the beginning, and went through every single bloody line, trimming it down...

7 Julian

Howarth, Doctor Who's sound recordist.

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the buffet that the Holiday Arabian Resort has laid on for us. Thankfully, Julian's bus Early start tomorrow. Our coach leaves the hotel (or 'the House of Disrepute' - turned up a few minutes ago. He's here, eating chips and sandwiches by the pool with least the ladies cover up in daylight hours) at 5.30am. Sob! It's almost midnight now.the rest of us. At 3.30am! Oh yes! (I'm e-mailing from my iPhone! By the pool! In the Breakfast on set tomorrow, in the desert. Mmm, sand.dark!) David's bus wasn't far behind ours, in the end. It was pulled over because the

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2009 20:03:07 GMTtail-light was broken, or something, but the driver talked his way out of it.

DUBAI

This is making me hoot! Julie and I sit here all day, wondering what you're all up to. It's Dubai, in the Masfout region of Ajman, and there's a 'nightclub' actually in the hotel,

bed! No news from here. All is quiet.

less so. He's laughing. 'We're in a whorehouse, in the middle of the desert,' he just said.

'What could possibly go wrong?'

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2009 22:51:21 GMT

DUBAI

asleep! I hope. But I feel like writing an e-mail anyway. I'm so close to the end of

RE:

DUBAI

this

4.17 script... but actually quite relaxed. I'm sure I can finish it by Friday, so I don't

The Best Little Whorehouse in Dubai. That is hilarious. And why the hell didn't the need to rush tonight. I'm tempted to stay up all night and have a marathon session...

bus have its lights on? With David Tennant on board?! Dear God, the insurance. hmm, but not tempted enough.

Christ, I'd love chips now, you bastards. I was thinking about what you were saying about Ed Thomas. It's true, you know,

he

really is the Other Producer. I remember appointing him came completely out of

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2009 01 :13:34 GMT

the

blue, for all of us. We surprised ourselves! He was a stranger, and I think we'd all

RE:

DUBAI

presumed

that we'd appoint someone that Julie, Phil or I had worked with before,

I'm attaching more script to this e-mail, although I don't know if you can open it. You simply in order to have someone trusted on our side, on such a huge project. But then

should be asleep, anyway. Hasn't it gone 5am in Dubai? Unless you're with the exotic Ed appeared, out of nowhere. (He'd been working abroad for years, so he wasn't on the

dancers. Maybe you are an exotic dancer by now. It's a living. I actually thought I could industry radar - though it turned out that Julie had been to school with him, which

finish this script tomorrow... but then, out of the blue, a friend of mine who I haven't was a complete coincidence.) But it wasn't so much Ed's experience that counted;

seen for ages is going to be in Cardiff. I should have lied and said I was in Manchester, we booked him because we so immediately liked him. Bit mad, but there we go.

but I'm too nice. So... bah! So close, and yet so far. But actually no one in the country had the experience that this show demanded, so

we

thought, what the hell, go for the nice man. (More than just 'nice'. I mean, we

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2009 19:47:15

GMT *profoundly liked him.) Plus, he was Welsh. With the staffing, that's really helped.*

RE:

DUBAI

I always remember, when I went in to meet him, one of the very first things that Ed

We don't have internet access in the hotel (well, there's Wi-Fi, but it's rubbish), so I'm spoke about was Health and Safety. People take the piss out of Health and Safety, like

e-mailing you from my phone again. I might be able to get better Wi-Fi in Reception, its a joke, ignoring the fact that the words 'health' and 'safety' are pretty important,

apparently... if I stand in the corner, on one leg... so I'll try to download the latest if not more important than anything else. That was burnt into me when I was quite

young and starting out in TV. I was part of the BBC Children's Department that

4.17 script to my laptop tomorrow. Exciting!

produced UP2U, the show on which Anthea Turner sat on a pyrotechnic and was

We went on a recce into the Margham Desert today. We had to travel the final

blown up, live on air! I'm not kidding, whole lives were ruined in the repercussions of

stretch on an army truck. The only way on or off was by stepladder, or swinging down

that, whole careers, whole families. It was horrific. So, good old Ed, I thought.

on a rope. I swung down. Babs from Make-Up didn't. David and Michelle weren't even

I'm sure if he were writing a book - I'd read it! -- he would have such good tales to

allowed on board, for 'health and safety' reasons! (That annoyed them.) The double-

report from Series One, from the front line. After the first block, the budget was almost

decker looks awesome. Seven tons of slightly damaged bus. Everyone is impressed. Ed

out of control. A proper emergency. I remember, for a week or so, having to look seriously

and his design team have done the most amazing job on this episode. It's going to look

at
three or four episodes to see if I could gut them to become Midnight-style cheapos. Of

beautiful in HD. He's the best designer in the business. What would Doctor Who do

without him?

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY			

course, Julie, Phil, Ed, Tracie and everyone pulled together, and somehow made it work

Text message from: Russell- to this day, I don't really know how - because they're magicians. That's really when

Sent: 12-Feb-2008 09:45everyone gelled, and became a team, rather than just colleagues. Born out of battle! And

I've got you texting with 'SANDSTORM!' and Julie phoning withwhen the show started to work, Ed started to fly... and then Torchwood gave him more

'SANDSTORM!' I'm hooting. Save yourself, Ben.

money, to expand the team, to create an empire. He's simply the best designer I've ever

worked with. Such a fine man, too. At the same time, it really is this format at work. It's

Text message from: Ben

the magic of Doctor Who. The designer is given Shakespearean London, and Pompeii,

Sent: 12-Feb-2008 10:10

I'm sheltering in a Portaloo. I'm no fool.and spaceships, and 10 Downing Street. It makes you fly. The show demands it.

Or maybe I'm talking bollocks, and his next episode will be comprised entirely of

Text message from: Bensets made out of paper plates. Damn you, Thomas!

Sent: 12-Feb-2008 12:21

Right, a bit more work, then bed. Oh, and I keep musing -- I'm in a musing mood!

Apparently, this is the worst sandstorm to hit the region since last-- on how comparatively relaxed I am writing 4.17. If you compare the angst of writing

September. A few minutes ago, Jarnes Strong was close to abandoning*Voyage of the Damned* (*there's a book all about it, did you know?*), then this is nowhere

the day's shooting altogether. The cameras are crunching every timenear as bad. But why?! Does this mean it's shit? But then the obvious thing occurred to

they pull focus, because they're full of sand! It's pretty hellish. Butme, only the other day: normally, I've been writing this stuff with the stress of a whole

they're

soldiering on. season on my back. I'd write the Christmas episode with 13 more bastards looming, and

I'd write these finales in a welter of Edits, and Dubs, and problems, and transmission

message from: Russell looming - which simply isn't there now. In other words, this is what life should be like.

12-Feb-2008 12:26 This is what writing should be like. I've just been working myself to death for the past

teach them for pulling focus. There's no time for art! I'm sitting here four years. That's obvious, isn't it? I bet you worked that out. I've only just seen it.

scenes from tomorrow's schedule. I love an emergency. I once

Have a nice breakfast. In the sand. You could have a sand-wich. See how bloody
filmed on Lindisfarne with a helicopter in a storm.
I've done it all, me. Are

funny I am?! I rule!
Yes. you still
buried in that Portaloo?! Is it buried in the sand?!

Text message from: Ben

Sent

12-Feb-2008

07:22

FROM: RUSSELL T

DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2009 03:13:38 GMT

It's so sandy, this isn't even funny. Sand everywhere! I know, I know,
it's **RE: DUBAI**

a desert, but this is a bloody sandstorm! They've had to go buy us
all I'm so close to the end of 4.17... but too tired to finish. Argh.
Still, I've got all day at

headscarves from the nearest shop. (Yeah, there's a shop. In
the home tomorrow, with a Dub in the evening, so I hope I'll
finish then. The Doctor has

desert. This is
mad.) arrived at Naismith's
mansion, and it's all about to kick off...

Of

course, that's nothing compared to the problems out in Dubai. Lord E God.

They

said that David's hair had turned blond with sand. And the sand stuck to Tracie's

Text message from: Russell

make-up! Julie and I were laughing so much at that, she almost crashed the car. Tracie

Sent: 12-Feb-2008 09:19

said
it was stuck to her lipstick! Oh, not funny. Not funny at all.

Julie is worried. I've woken up to e-mails from her saying, 'They're
an

I
hope you survive today. Last I heard, it was windy, but maybe not as windy as
hour behind! We can't use the camera crane!' Oh Lordy.

yesterday.
You won't know until you're on set. Get inside that Portaloo!

Text message from: Ben

Sent: 12-Feb-2008 09:39

The sandstorm has hit! An actual sandstorm! The latest shots are
unusable. The schedule is in tatters. CODE RED! ABORT! ABORT!

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWENTY-THREE: FOR GALLIFREY			

Text	message	from:
Ben		
message from: Ben		

13-Feb-2008 15:13

Sent: 13-Feb-2008 03:51

of that was re-shot today. Wait till you see today's rushes!

Back on set. James is reshooting a lot of yesterday's material. The

A really productive day.

weather is holding. First take of the day just completed. Only another 11 hours to go! In other news, I got my headscarf caught in my zip. The

message from: Russell

Costume Department couldn't free me. Julian had to step in and use

13-Feb-2008 15:27

brute force.

feel a little peace returning. And I'm five lines away from the end of

Text message from: Ben

Sent: 13-Feb-2008 04:19

message from: Russell

I spoke too soon. Filming has been disrupted by a gang of

13-Feb-2008 15:52

quadbikers. Try pink-paging that! Ha ha. It's Friday 13th. What could

am literally - LITERALLY - typing This was the day the Time Lords possibly go wrong?

For Gallifrey!'9

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2009
08:39:02 GMT

message from: Ben

RE: DUBAI

13-Feb-2008 17:12

That is the best line EVER:

me script! I have internet now! I'm in Reception, standing on one

»I got my headscarf caught in my zip. The Costume Dept couldn't free
me! Julian

had to step in and use brute force.«

I forwarded that to Julie. You can probably hear her
hoot.

FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2009 17:17:34 GMT

I'm glad to hear that it's better today -- so far! I only had three hours sleep. The
4.17

RE: DUBAI

script was drumming through my head. I'm attaching the latest instalment, but
don't Here you go. I'll spend the rest of the
evening on it, but you can have this instalment

worry about reading it. You probably can't even download it. I'm sending it out of
habit. while you have internet.

The Bay has woken up now. I'm off for a coffee. It's sunny. No sand. Ha.

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2009 20:58:42
GMT

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2009
12:58:45 GMT

DUBAI

RE:

DUBAI

LORDS!!! WILF!!! DONNA REMEMBERING!!! So, so exciting... and now

I'm about a page from the end. It's very exciting. Wilf (of Donna): 'Doctor!

She's your final script is nigh. How do you feel? You're about to write your last ever Doctor

starting to remember!8 But I have to pause. It's a hell of a mess. I'll have to edit it all
Who episode, Russell! (Don't you need a break first?)

down. Maybe after I deliver it, though. To hell with it.

Anyway, Mike keeps trying to send us desert footage, but the internet connection is
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2009 12:10:31 GMT

failing, so it's still a mystery to us. We are blind. Hope you're surviving.
RE: DUBAI

4.17 script really took it out of me. Now, of course, I've sunk into the panic of

Text message from:
Russell thinking
that I don't know what happens next. And I get so paranoid. Julie texted last

Sent: 13-Feb-2008 14:37

We've got rushes! We've got an edit! BEAUTIFUL! But Jesus, that
9 'Even as he celebrated, the creature known as the Master had no concept of his greater role in events,' explains the

as every human on Earth turns into the Master (except Wilf, who is in one of Naismith's booths and so protected by

sand. You must all be exfoliated to death.
'radiation shielding',
and Donna, who is protected by the metacrisis energy that she inherited from the Doctor in Doctor Who

'For this day was far more than humanity's end: Cut to a black void, and to the Narrator in flowing robes. This was the

the Time Lords returned.' He lifts his staff, a warrior's cry: 'For Gallifrey!' Suspended in the void are ranks of Time Lords,

8 In Naismith's mansion, Wilf is on his mobile to Donna, who's at home in Chiswick with her mum and fiancé, as the Master above and beyond the Narrator, like the circle level of a theatre. Hundreds of Time Lords, all standing, calling out: 'For Gallifrey!

takes over the human race, turning everyone into his image. 'But they've changed,' Donna tells Wilf. 'Grandad, that's like... like For victory! For the End of Time itself!'

the sort of thing that happened... before...' Intercut with fast, fierce images - Ood. Davros, Adipose, Sontarans. the Doctor. 'My head. Ohh, my head...'

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

night and said, 'Love the script,' so I spent all night thinking, is that all? Is that it?! What's wrong with it? Why? (I think there is something wrong with it, though. But I can't quite see what it is.)

Trade just phoned from Dubai. From a dune. She says that they've caught up. They've got time for an extra shot, even! Blimey, what a success. That crew must have worked so hard. This morning, I saw the crane shot of them stepping off the bus. It looks wonderful.

I'm in Manchester now, until Tuesday. A few days off. Nice. Safe journey home, Ben!

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR
THE ROAD
TO HELL

In which the Doctor's mother is inspired by
Chris Rea,

Rassilon loses a diamond in the dark,
and the Master eats, shoots, and leaves

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2009 01:50:55 GMT

CARDIFF

I'm back! In Cardiff Christ, that journey took five bloody hours. The M6 was closed.

The M5 was blocked. Parts of the M4, specifically the parts leading into Cardiff, were

closed. I thought I was going to have to walk.

Anyway, I'm now staring into the abyss of my last ever Doctor Who script. And

I'm scared. What happens?! Shit, shit. shit. Still, 4.16 read-through tomorrow, with

Lindsay Duncan as Adelaide. Fantastic piece of casting! She's one of the finest actors working in the UK.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2009 13:17:34 GMT

RE: CARDIFF

It's 18 February. We've been at this Great Correspondence lark for TWO BLOODY

YEARS! Can you believe it? To the day! Whole races have evolved under the sea in that

time. Back then, Tony Blair was Prime Minister, Matt Smith was in short trousers,

Russell Brand was allowed on the BBC, and Penny Carter was set to be the Tenth

Doctor's companion. No one had even heard of iPhones, Adipose or Cyber-Strawberry

flavoured Frubes. Where has the time gone? How was the 4.16 read-through?

1. OMITTED

2. FX SHOT. GALLIFREY - DAY

FX: LONG FX SHOT, craning up to reveal the mountains of Gallifrey, as Ep.3.12 sc.40. But now transformed; the mountains are burning, a landscape of flame. The valley's a pit of fire, cradling the hulks of broken spaceships. Keep craning up to see, beyond; the Citadel of the Time Lords. The glass dome now cracked and open.

CUT TO:

3. INT. CITADEL - DAY

FX: DMP WIDE SHOT, an ancient hallway, once beautiful, high vaults of stone & metal. But the roof is now broken, open to the dark orange sky, the edges burning. Bottom of frame, a walkway, along which walk THE NARRATOR, with staff, and 2 TIME LORDS, the latter pair in ceremonial collars.

FX: NEW ANGLE, LONG SHOT, the WALKWAY curves round, Narrator & Time Lords now following the curve, heading towards TWO HUGE, CARVED DOORS, already open. A Black Void beyond.

CUT TO:

4. INT. BLACK VOID

FX: OTHER SIDE OF THE HUGE DOORS, NARRATOR & 2 TIME LORDS striding through. The Time Lords stay by the doors, on guard; lose them, and the doors, as the Narrator walks on.

FX: WIDE SHOT of the Black Void - like Superman's Krypton, the courtroom/Phantom Zone scenes - deep black, starkly lit from above. Centre of the Void: a long table, with 5 TIME LORDS in robes (no collars) seated.

The Narrator - now designated THE LORD PRESIDENT - reaches the table. He puts down his staff, loosens his robes - underneath, a battered, black flack-jacket; this man is a warrior. One hand is sheathed in a BLUE-METAL GAUNTLET.

Amongst those seated; THE CHANCELLOR, male, 45, thin, worried; THE PARTISAN, female, 50, calm, shrewd.

LORD PRESIDENT
What news of the Doctor?

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE

TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 18
FEBRUARY 2009 23:51:39 GMT

RE: CARDIFF

This e-mail exchange between Steven Moffat and Russell discusses the
The read-through was simply magnificent. David is raising his game up, and up, and

possible use of the Daleks in the Tenth Doctor's final episode...up. And it was kind of
stratospheric to begin with. Lindsay Duncan was marvellous,

and she was matched every inch of the way by the Great Man. David is so wild
and

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: STEVEN MOFFAT, FRIDAY
20 FEBRUARY 2009 12:14:32 GMT

4.18unpredi like a Doctor that you've never seen before. You can just see him revving

up to go out in style. It got the best round of applause I've ever heard a script
get, but Look at me, facing MY LAST SCRIPT! Oh, the laughter. Yet, why does
it still feel like

an enormous mountain to climb? Every time?that was for David, really.

Now, listen. I need the Daleks, I think. Does that P** your plans? Can I have
themFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 19
FEBRUARY 2009 23:43:44 GMT in 4.18? Thing is, I've lumbered
myself with all that stuff I told you about -- Gallifrey!

Time Lords! Evil Time Lords! But the problem with the Time Lords, as we well
know,DALEKS

is that they're a bunch of men in cloaks. So, a Time Lord-Dalek alliance would
spiceTonight, I spent a long time wondering -- I've been wondering for a fortnight
now

things up a bit.-- whether to bring back the Daleks in 4.18. And I decided...

But that might interfere with your plans, and you're the boss. What do you think?

YES!!!

I bloody love Daleks. The danger of 4.18 is that villainous Time Lords amount to...

well, a bunch of old bastards in cloaks. If you're eight years old, you don't want to

be told that these Time Lords have turned bad; you want to see it. So, what could be Hello, right, yes! better than a Time Lord-Dalek alliance? The final twist of the Time War, which meant

Actually, we do have Daleks. Sorry, I really thought you knew that. Erm, I dunno, that the Doctor had to destroy them all. does it matter? Would kids really complain? Um, um ...

So. Good. They're in. I did run it past Julie, just to see her reaction. If she'd said, I suppose, hand on my heart, I'd rather it was the Daleks' first appearance in a while,

'Oh, not again,' I don't think I'd have done it. But she said, 'Oh, you've got to!' Besides, just to give us a boost after they've all seen what the New Guy looks like. But this is me

if we're talking about a Time War (which we are), in which the Daleks fought the thinking like an adult. Would my boys really mind?

Time Lords (which we've been banging on about for four series now), you'd be so We don't have Davros, if that helps.

disappointed if the Daleks didn't actually turn up. Still thinking, hang on...

I really had better start writing it, hadn't I? Imagine if David's final episode is a Reproduced with kind permission

disappointment. It's terrifying, Ben! But I have to bloody start. Soon. Not tonight.

Soon.

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2009 14:58:12 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2009 01:43:03 GMT RE: DALEKS

RE:

DALEKS

I

really don't see this as a setback. Honestly, I think the finale will work better without

Isn't there a danger that you're overusing the Daleks? They've appeared in three

out of Daleks. You've done Daleks. Lots of times. Lots of Daleks. They're fun, and ruthless,

your four series finales. Do you really need them again? Then again, I suppose everyone and scary, and brilliant, but they've popped up at the end of every one of your series,

loves

Daleks... except the third - and that featured the Master! Your final script shouldn't feel like

Greatest Hits package. It shouldn't feel like a Best Of. It should feel fresh and

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2009 12:47:10 GMT imaginative. Without the Daleks, you're allowing the script to breathe. That, I think,

RE:

DALEKS is why it feels different this time. The writing, I mean. That's good. The Daleks would



suffocate, and upstage, and you simply don't need them... do you?

Bollocks. Shit. Damn. Ohhh shit. Steven is

using the Daleks in Series Five. OH,

BOLLOCKS!!!

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DOCTOR

WHO:

THE

WRITER'S

TALE

TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

walks away...FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. TUESDAY
24 FEBRUARY 2009 11:21:20 GMT

the MR DANES-MASTER steps into his place.RE: DALEKS

It's 11.20am. For the record, I just opened a new file, called it '4.18', and started
DANES-MASTERwriting. MY

LAST

SCRIPT!

got all the time in the world!But no Daleks. I backed down. That was the only and instant option.
Steven didn't

TO:even kick up a fuss, which was really kind. He was trying to make it work. But I don't

think using the Daleks would have been fair on him. New Doctor, old Daleks,
that's

6. INT. THE GATE ROOM - DAYbrilliant. You
can't have seen the metal bastards just a few months earlier. It would

MASTER strides in -completely devalue the impact of that launch. I'm just pissed off because I wasted
time

thinking about them, and weaving them in. It was a lot better than it sounded in
my

THE MASTERquick e-mails
to you. I'd really given it some work, to make it different. They

weren't
Right then, what have we got?!

just Daleks beetling about, squawking and killing. It was a Dalek Parliament, with a

ALL IN THE ROOM turn to face him - THREE TECHNICIAN-MASTERS,Dalek Minister -- wise,
whispery, and clever -- entering into a political alliance with
the

NAISMITH-MASTER, ABIGAIL-MASTER. With THREE
VISORED GUARDS onTime Lords. Daleks as politicians. It was brilliant. It showed how low the Time
Lords

duty, same height S build as the Master. NB,
when not an FX shot,

on singles.had fallen, to enter a treaty with them. Anyway. Dead now.

Master now picks up slight traits of his originals, i.e., his

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 25
FEBRUARY 2009 00:54: 07 GMT

Naismith is
a bit grandiose, his Mr Danes is a bit subservient,

4.18

Abigail is... not feminine, but flirty.

Here we go, the first nine pages of 4.18. Not bad for one day. But I bloody hate this

NAISMITH-MASTER

stage. You can never tell what to dwell on, how much setting-up is needed, what Everything's quiet. As it would be, on a world without

needs saying in what order. I thought the Doctor would have escaped from Naismith's dissent!

mansion by Page 10. That was my rough plan. But I'm on Page 9, and it's still ages

ABIGAIL-MASTER

away. The China stuff is cut-able, I suppose, but it's a great image. Very China. And Six billion, seven hundred and twenty-seven million, nine

very Master... and forty-nine thousand, three hundred and thirty-

versions of us, all awaiting orders!

5. INT. NAISMITH'S HALL - DAY1 CLOSE-

MASTER

much as I like looking at myself, I think you can

UPS on STRAPS, being tightened.

out of that dress.

BUCKLES, clicked into place. ROPES,

MASTER

that an invitation?

being tied tight.

MASTER

REVEAL THE DOCTOR. Now bound on to the upright Hannibal Lecter -
tr olle y. Wide-e ye d, helples s, with the lea the r str a p a cr oss his

that would be different. And brilliant. But later!

mouth. THE MASTER leaning in.

THE

MASTER
MASTER

ABIGAIL-

a psychological minefield.

Now, if you'll excuse me. I've got a planet to run.

ABIGAIL-MASTER walks out, passing TECHNICIAN-MASTERS.

1 Scenes 5 to 12 - which immediately follow 4.18's opening scenes of the Time Lords on Gallifrey discussing the whereabouts THE MASTER (looks up at CCTV)

of the Doctor and the Master - depict the Master's conquest of the human race, but were heavily trimmed by the shooting-script stage. The sequence set in China was cut almost completely.

Is he watching?

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL			
SCENE CONTINUES, INTERCUT WITH SC.7-12 -			to you,
immediately, putting you in charge of all the			
			Earth's defences.
CUT TO:			
			THE
MASTER			
7. INT. NAISMITH'S HALL - DAY			Excellent. And
New York?			
MR DANES-MASTER with THE DOCTOR, a GUARD now putting a			
widescreen			CUT TO:
TV in place, with CCTV & audio of the Gate Room.			
			9. INT. UNIT HQ, NEW
YORK - DAY			
DANES-MASTER			
There'd be no point if he wasn't. Take a look at this,			GENERAL-MASTER -
i.e., formerly a UNIT General - to CAMERA:			
Doctor. The whole world pulling together!			
			GENERAL-
MASTER			
WILF			Yes sir, UNIT HQ
reporting - and this place has been			
Let him go! You monster!			gathering alien
technology way beyond the United Nations,			
			we're locked and
loaded!			
REVEAL WILF, tied to a chair; a great distance away from the			
Doctor. They're being kept apart.			FX: CUT TO REVERSE,
FOUR DIFFERENT OPERATIVE-MASTERS sitting at			
			workstations. After the
WIDE SHOT, then cutting between them:			
DANES-MASTER (to the screen)			
			OPERATIVE-
MASTER #1			
His dad's still kicking up a fuss.			
			We've got Compound

Lasers, salvaged from the Sontaran

WILF

fleet -

I'd be proud if I was!

OPERATIVE-

MASTER #2

DANES-MASTER

- biological

weapons from Antilles Major and Minor -

Hush now. Listen to your Master.

OPERATIVE-

MASTER #3

CUT TO the Doctor throughout sc.7-12. Trapped, staring, - and
Bitterswipe Plasma guns, rescued from a Draconian

speechless. As the world goes to hell.

Dart -

CUT TO the Gate Room, the Master turning to a wall-screen - The Master turns
to the CCTV, addressing the Doctor:

THE

MASTER

THE MASTER

No wonder you love
this place. A world full of weapons!

Right then! Who have we got out there? Report! Are you so
proud of these Humans now, Doctor?

(the

Doctor gagged)

CUT TO: Nothing to say?

8. INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM -
DAY DANES-MASTER

Ohh, that' s his
weapon. Words that can bring down governments

THE PRESIDENT-MASTER to CAMERA, American accent: and
cause the stars to shine. But not any more.

PRESIDENT-MASTER The Doctor just
staring. Furious.

This is Washington! As President of the United States,

CUT TO sc.7, Gate Room,
NAISMITH-MASTER manning a desk:

it's my honour and privilege to transfer the -

THE

MASTER

NAISMITH-MASTER

No, don't do the accent, no.
priority call. Beijing, China.

Excuse me, I've got a

On screen -

PRESIDENT-MASTER

No. Sorry. So, I can transfer all United Nations
protocols CUT TO:

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL			
10.	INT.	CHINESE	MILITARY
NIGHT			COMMAND
			-
			THE MASTER
			Forgive me for
			saying it, but... you seem to be rather
			The CHINA-MASTER to CAMERA; this one's manic and
			wired. excitable.
			CHINA-
MASTER			CHINA-MASTER
			Oh yes! I think
			this one was self-medicating, sir! Bit
			Reporting in, sir! This is the Central Military Commission
			too much!
			of the People's Liberation Army, sir!
			THE
MASTER			THE MASTER
			I haven't got
			room for excitable. Best if you just shoot
			And what's the priority?
			yourself.
			CHINA-MASTER
			The Doctor watching,
			horrified, mmmmmmmmm, no!
			Just... the world's largest standing army, sir! Over two
			million soldiers, and all of them us!
MASTER			
			Yes sir, now sir?
			THE MASTER
			I know, what's your point?
MASTER			
			CHINA-MASTER
			If you could.

Just wanted you to see it, sir! It's magnificent - look,
look, look - I've gathered them on parade, sir!

MASTER

Consider it done,
sir!

CAMERA going handheld, as China-Master goes to the window. He's
on the second floor, indicates down, outside -

On the Doctor,
mmam, mmm, mmm - as offstage -

CUT TO:

Bang!

11. EXT. PARADE GROUND - NIGHT

His despair.

FX: huge stretch of tarmac, filled with the MASTER-ARMY. IDENTICAL

Wilf lowers his head,
groans. Ashamed.

MASTER-SOLDIERS, all in Chinese army uniform.

The CHINA-MASTER looking down from his window: Having a file
that says '4.18' is an enormous comfort. It will be better, waking up tomorrow

CHINA-MASTER morning, knowing
that at least some of it exists. That's why idiots say that rewriting is

Preseeeent arms! harder than writing.
Nothing is worse than all those blank pages, staring at you. They really

do stare. They have a gimlet
eye. I love that phrase, gimlet eye.

FX: THE MASTER-ARMY presents arms, all in unison.

But just as I get started,
I'm thwarted - because I'm in Upper Boat tomorrow, for the 4.17

CHINA-MASTER (CONT'D) Tone Meeting.
That's when I discover that 4.18 has 27 pence left in its budget. But they

And salute your Master! did a test of the 4.16
Water Monsters on set today, and both Julie and Nikki phoned me to

say that it's the Best Monster
Ever. They were so excited! So, that's good.

FX: THE MASTER-ARMY salutes, in unison.

P.S. Apparently, David had
dinner with Peter Davison and Matt Smith at Steven's house

CUT TO: the other day! Wow!

Blimey. Etc.

12. INT. CHINESE MILITARY COMMAND - NIGHT

FROM: BENJAMIN
COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2009
13:21:53 GMT

CAMERA swings round to CHINA-MASTER, grinning like a kid.

RE: 4.18

Lords back. (Dull bastards? Hardly!) Do you feel that thrill?

Thrilling to see the Time

CHINA-MASTER

Again?

Or is it a dark pit of despair?

Isn't that just fantastic?!

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE

TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 25
FEBRUARY 2009 18:45:32 GMT FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2009
02:23:16 GMT

RE:

4.18

4.18I'd thought the Time Lords would be thrilling, but they're so hard to write, sat there More 4.18! I was going to write a proper e-mail to go with this -- my thoughts! -- but in the black void, arguing away. That's why I got rid of them when I brought back I've gone over my cigarette limit, and have to stop. But I will tomorrow, I promise. the show - they spout bollocks. I tried loosening up the language, making them more

real, but that made it worse. They became a bunch of chumps in posh robes, sounding FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 27 FEBRUARY 2009 12:33:54 GMT

glib. It reduced the whole status of the Time War. So, they're back to 'My Lord' and **RE:** **4.18**all that
bollocks.

I say how bloody astonished I am that I'm on the last script, and haven't had a

Great Tone Meeting today. The tone words for 4.17 were... 'the best'. Make it the cold or a bad back? Let alone chicken pox! I'm even hesitant about typing that outbest. Ever! Ha! But I must have talked for five hours solid, so to hell with work tonight. to you, because it's tempting fate. You know how you work hard, have a holiday, and I'm going to watch TV instead. Plus, I thought it was Thursday all day, when it's then instantly get a cold? I reckon I'm going to finish 4.18, and get smallpox, and Wednesday, so I feel I've been given an extra day. (I really believe that.) leukaemia, and CJD, and never play the piano again. I actually think I've got a cold,

I'm not letting myself have it. Is that possible? The other day, I fell asleep watchingFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES , WEDNESDAY
25 FEBRUARY 2009 19:27:45 GMT TV. When I woke up, I had a cold. A proper cold - throat and nose all bunged up.**RE:**
4.18

I get a cold, it goes straight to my ears, and that's what I had, like knives goingIf Andy casts a proper, heavyweight thesp or two in those Time Lord roles, with the right into my head. I walked around the flat

going, 'No, no, no, no, no, I CAN'T!' posh robes, and the beards, and the 'My lord', it will all come together. Time Lords are And then I went to bed, for two hours, and woke up... and it had gone. Completely supposed to be like that. That's why the Doctor ran away. Don't you think? gone. But that's bollocks. You can't actually do that, can you? Maybe it was a Phantom

P.S. A five-hour Tone Meeting? You're going to miss them. No other show will ever Cold. Yes. I've invented the Phantom Cold.do Tone Meetings quite like this one! Anyway, this script is puzzling me. It's as though it's coming out of nowhere.

-- mysticism alert! -- it feels like I'm just transcribing it. I sit down to write, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2009 19:55:00 GMT and start typing, and things come out that I was never expecting. Like that Donna RE: 4.18

with the metacrisis halo.31 thought of that ages ago, do you remember? I got They're filming in 4.16's Bio-Dome tonight, actually the Great Glasshouse at Wales' all excited about having lots more Donna, and imagined that scene... then discarded National Botanic Garden.2 It's hilarious. They switch the lights on at night, and the it. Completely discarded it. I had a much smaller sequence in mind for 4.18, just birds wake up. It's a cacophony! Post-sync nightmare! I've just had to add explain-the to park Donna and get on with the main plot. (The Doctor was going to get on the

and just say one word to her - 'Sleep' - like a post-hypnotic command, to birds-dialogue - 'You've got birds!' - and e-mail it to them, top speed, while they were

her out and save her). And then I sat down yesterday, and... well, I just typed rehearsing the actual scene!

the metacrisis halo stuff. I know I always sit here with a thousand possibilities

for space, and I sort of surf them as I type, but that just downloaded. It was FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2009 15:14:55 GMT

there. It was almost easy. Even if it is eating up FX! But I'll worry about that later. RE: 4.18

felt improvised, yet correct at the same time. (I'm not describing this very well. How are things on Gallifrey today?

it's impossible to describe. I'm trying to describe writing, really.)

you know that long conversation between the Doctor and the Master, in
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 26 FEBRUARY
2009 15:14:55 GMT

mansion? I had something completely different in mind. There was this
RE: 4.18

Gallifrey is slow and difficult. I keep thinking I should stop, and pick it up again
3 As Donna begins to remember her adventures with the Doctor ('My head! It's getting hotter, and hotter, and hotter --!'), a

of golden energy - like the metacrisis energy that burns in her eyes in 4.13 - blasts out of her head, hitting the Master tonight, but they've started prep, so I must soldier on. that are chasing her, knocking them out cold. Donna is left dazed ('But what did I...?'), before falling to the ground herself,

but alive. 'But really,' the Doctor tells the Master, 'did you think I'd leave my best friend without a defence

The Master urges the Doctor, in vain, to reveal the whereabouts of the TARDIS {in fact, it's parked in Naismith's stables),

the Doctor tries to persuade the Master to travel the universe with him - 'partners in time'. Of course, the Master
2 The Bio-Dome on Bowie Base One is, in effect, a huge greenhouse full of lush vegetation, with walkways running between declines. the plants.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

terrific sequence where the Doctor uses his wise words to tempt the Danes-Master into rebelling against the actual Master. That's why it's the Danes-Master in the room,

INT.

HESPERUS

because he's a servant. 'You're the Master, just as much as he is. Why should you Russell's first draft of The End of Time Part Two features this extendedserve anyone?' The Doctor is trying to persuade all the different bits of the Master's version of the scene in which the Doctor, Wilf, Addams and Rossiter hide fromsubconscious to start fighting each other. Divide and conquer, etc. And it looks like it's the Master aboard the Hesperus, having teleported there from Naismith'sgoing to work, like the Danes-Master is tempted... until he just bursts out laughing. mansion. This scene, written on 28 February 2009, was almost entirely cutNever tempted at all. 'Unfortunately for you, I think I'm wonderful!' But then none from the final shooting script...of that appeared. I mean, that often happens, I change my mind while writing... but

why does this feel different? 66. INT. HESPERUS, FLIGHT DECK - DAY

Maybe all these options have been there for so long now that I'm cherry-picking, without being so aware of the process. But it's quite disconcerting, because I don't THE DOCTOR, WILF, ADDAMS & ROSSITER still tense, waiting in theknow what I think of the script. This script feels like a stranger. I even feel quite dark. In whispers:

dispassionate about it. Not uninterested, though. It's filling my head from the moment

DOCTORI wake up. I can't concentrate on anything else. At the same time, look at the speed.

Look how much I've done in two days! Normally, that sort of speed would leave me I think we're safe.exhausted, and I'm a bit tired, but not knackered, not at all. It's actually physically

different. (Until the smallpox and leukaemia.) WILF

He could still be listening.

Maybe it's because I know it's my last episode. Sometimes, just for a vivid five minutes or so, I let myself imagine a few days' time - maybe a week, or ten days THE DOCTOR- when I will have finished. I keep thinking of going for a coffee in the Bay. A coffee,

He's
only got radar. We don't actually need to whisper.at Coffee Mania, like I do every morning,
but without this mountain of work bearing
down on me. I'm looking forward to that coffee with absolute joy. It's getting
closer. WILFit's going to be real. It feels enormous.
Bloody enormous. (still whispering)
And 'Coffee Mania' is such a good
name. I can stop, then?

DOCTOR (stillFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 27
FEBRUARY 2009 18:10:04 GMT whispering)RE: 4.18

Perhaps someone up there thinks you deserve to enjoy writing this script? (No,
that's Yes you can.

silly. There is no one 'up there'. Except Julie, maybe. Is she still holed up in
Upper They relax, Rossiter & Addams hurrying to inspect controls.Boat's attic?) But
where are the usual problems? Should we invent some? To make The

Writer's Tale 2 more interesting? Ha ha. No, stay healthy and creative,
Russell. Maybe WILFit suits you. In LA, you'll be like
this all the time. But we're still in space! Outer space!
I don't like it,

my knees go all shivery. makes

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 27
FEBRUARY 2009 19:22:24
GMT ROSSITERRE:
4.18 You're
not going anywhere else, mate - the teleport's

blown,
and the engines are fried! All we've got is auxiliary»But where are the usual
problems? Should we invent some?«

lights
-

You had to go and say it! We watched the 4.16 rushes with the Water Monsters today.
T-E-R-R-I-F-Y-I-N-G! Truly, horribly terrifying. For the first time ever on this
show, He presses a switch, LOW-LEVEL LIGHTING conies up.I thought, 'That's too
much.' I was watching the rushes and flinching. (Mind you,

(CONT'D)it's bloody brilliant.) But they're zombies. They're out-and-out zombies, (cont p6l6)

but that's your lot! Everything else is kaput, we can't

move!

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

ADDAMS

DOCTOR

Thanks to you. You idiot!

THE DOCTOR

Nice to meet you too.

got- a screwdriver.

ADDAMS

brilliant! He can loosen screws! And then he can tighten
So you're not Human, right?

THE DOCTOR

Nope. Well, I was, back in 1999 for a couple of days, but.
that was like catching a 48-hour bug, I got over
it.' Okay, so who's your boss?
There's gotta be a higher

who's in charge? Who can I talk to?

ADDAMS

And you're the same species as that man, the Saxon-
THE
DOCTOR
me.

thing?

WILF

mean there's nothing? No one? Just you?! A major

They're Time Lords!

on the loose, an entire population transplanted,

knackered spaceship, and all we've got is a man in a suit

ADDAMS

a screwdriver? Who's got no idea what to do??!

Never heard of them. But tell me then, Mr Time Lord, since
you're so clever, what do we do next?

DOCTOR

about it.

THE DOCTOR

...I don't know.

ADDAMS

what are you even doing here? What's the point? What

hell is the point of you?!

No, but, you've gotta have reinforcements, what is there?

Police, Time Lordy police?

she walks way, slams a piece of broken-computer-metal to the

genuinely furious.

ROSSITER

A back-up squad?

ADDAMS

just Wilf and the Doctor, quiet, Wilf so trusting:

Special ops?

ROSSITER

you've got something, haven't you? Some sort of

An

army?

Doctor just looks at him)

THE

DOCTOR

trick up your sleeve? Good old

Clever little idea? Little

Nope.

of Doctor flim-flam, sort of thing?

ROSSITER

blimey.

Come on though, you've gotta have something, I dunno,

weapons? Any sort of gun, or laser, some sort of anti-

Saxon device?

1 In the 1996 Doctor Who TV Movie, set in San Francisco on New Year's Eve 1999, it is stated that the Doctor is half-human, on

his mother's side. Thereafter, this is never mentioned in the series again.

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were really cynical about me calming downmade them Bannakaffalatta-like. You can hardly be serious if you look like a cactus. the monsters, like I was bowing to pressure, fearing bad press, and letting the show

That thing you said last Friday about the 'Greatest Hits' package is lingering, because, down. It's true that the BBC is so scared these days, and that everyone is censoringDaleks or no Daleks, this feels a little bit like 'Russell's Greatest Hits' (or 'Greatest everything and being timid - but that's not why I was bloody well there! / think thoseMistakes'). Battered old spaceship. Funny aliens. A teleport escape. The Master. A monsters are wrong. In my heart. With all of my heart. I think children would beLazarus/Torchwood technology/experiment room... hmm, maybe not. Maybe that's petrified - not scared, but sick with fear and dread. That's so wrong. It's my job, mysimply the bread and butter of Doctor Who. Maybe every story looks the same when moral responsibility, to step in. Frankly, I trust my own judgement. Sometimes in thisyou reduce it to a list. I don't know. job, you have to stand there with a thousand people telling you that you're wrong, and

They're filming Adelaide's death on location tonight. It's a bastard, because there still believe that you're right. But then you get treated like a bloody coward.are 30 or so fans watching the filming, and the plot details in that scene are crucial. Anyway, I'm falling way behind on 4.18. The page count is seriously adrift. I thinkEveryone has been primed not to shout 'Bang!' when Adelaide's gun goes off, just about ten pages of those first 25 will have to go. TEN!!! All that speed, energy, and'Now!' or something so that it's not too clear. I hope that works. But I hate wasting excitement - for bloody nothing! And God knows when it's going to be complete. Ortime on fan defences. Screw 'em. even any good.

well. Etc! Tra la la. It's all funny in the end.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 1 MARCH 2009 01:51:28 GMT

RE:

4.18

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 1 MARCH 2009 21:00:53 GMT

The problem with Time Lords is not only do they spout nonsense, but they spout it at RE: 4.18each other. That's why I needed the Dalek ambassadors and the Dalek Minister, so

that I hope you're okay. Is there any point in reminding you that writing is almost always the Time Lord President would have someone to talk to.6 As things stand, he's stuck like this? Especially these big episodes. That's not much help, is it? I feel a bit useless. talking to the Chancellor, when they both know what's going on'. But what they're doing I love what you're writing at the moment, but don't know whether saying so makes it so complicated, so bloody complicated, so over-complicated, that they've got to talk

The Time Lords and Gallifrey are trapped (or 'Timelocked', that is sealed as though in a bubble) beyond time and space, on

edge of the Time War, in its final day. To escape, before they die, they send a signal to the Master, a simple signal of four5 In Doctor Who 4.17, two of Naismith's technicians, Addams ('35, smart, cool' - aged 30 in subsequent drafts) and Rossiter beats, transmitted back through time and implanted in his mind as a child. 'We need something to make the contact physical,' turn out to be human camouflages for Vinocci, alien salvagers with green, spiky faces. In 4.18, they help the Doctor and Wilf says the Lord President, plucking a diamond from the end of his staff, and throwing it towards an image of the Earth Theescape Naismith's mansion by teleporting to their spaceship, the Hesperus, in orbit a hundred thousand miles above the diamond burns, and vanishes in mid air... and reappears as a meteor falling to Earth. The Master senses its signal and Earth.

the diamond - in fact a Gallifreyan 'Whitepoint Star'. If he sends back the same signal, the link becomes a pathway6 In Doctor Who 4.18, the Narrator of 4.17 is revealed to be the Time Lord President. for the Time Lords to follow, thereby resurrecting themselves and Gallifrey

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S	CHAP
TALE				
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL				

DOCTORmuch difference. Yes, okay, it's over-length, but only a few days ago you were telling I'm nine hundred and six.me that 'idiots say that rewriting is harder than writing'...

Really, though?FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 1 MARCH 2009 22:17:23 GMT

RE:
4.18
DOCTOR

Yep.Fear not, I'm okay. You're so right, of course. It is like this every time. But it always feels new. I suppose that's because the scripts are new, each time, so it's a brand new IL

Fset of problems - but the same old misery. I think that long, dark night burnt it out of Nine hundred years. We must look like insects to you.me, for now. I woke up full of ideas and resolve. Long way to go, but... there is light! I wrote one of the best scenes ever today, between the Doctor and Wilf, on the Hesperus, THE DOCTORas they look out over Earth.

I think you look like giants.

WILF
Always dreamt of seeing a view like this. I'm an astronaut!
Bernard was doing Those lines about what Wilf was up to in 1948 are exactly what
It's dawn over England, look. during his National Service in the Parachute Regiment! I phoned him up, and he told
(pause)

me all that stuff. Imagine him, young Bernard, that extraordinary life ahead of him.
My wife's buried down there. I might never visit her again, now. I'm sure he said that it was actually in a blizzard. Well, he definitely did, because I said how remarkable that was. Then I did some research that said it would never snow

D'you think he changed them? In their graves?
in Palestine at that time of year... but I bet it did, that year! I sort of didn't want to

The Doctor appalled, stops working. Looks at the view.
challenge him on any details, so the image became a blizzard of bullets, which is lovely

-- and terrifying. I'm rather pleased with that.

THE DOCTOR

I'm sorry.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 2 MARCH 2009
01:39:19 GMT

WILF

RE:

4.18

Not your fault.
back this morning and cut a lot out of the opening to 4.18. The American

I went

THE

DOCTOR accents gag, the China-Master shooting himself...
some nice stuff in there, but just

Isn't it?
really. More importantly, I'd gone down an odd little tangent, at the top of the

delays,

where I had the Danes-Master getting all the crucial scenes with the Doctor.

episode,

Pause. Then, of the view, indicating the Mediterranean:

but he doesn't feel like the real Master, so I've swapped that around. It feels

Funny,

WILF

now. I wonder why I did that.

right,

1948, I was over there. End of the Mandate in Palestine.
Ah, I know. I've just remembered, and come back from the bottom of this e-mail to

Private Mott! Skinny little idiot, I was. Stood on this

rooftop, middle of a skirmish, like a blizzard, all these
explain. It was because I had that subplot about the Doctor tempting the subservient

bullets in the air. World gone mad.
Danes-Master, trying to get him to rebel. Once that had gone, I'd no need for the

(smiles)

Danes-

Master, really. (And I think I liked my original description of Danes as 'cool,

Ah, you don't want to listen to an old man's tales.

cruel', and fancied him, bizarrely. That's so embarrassingly true.)

handsome,

THE

DOCTOR
outside her house. Remember when I

Also, I put Donna's stuff in an alleyway, not

I'm older than you.
described that scene to you, ages ago, and I set it in an alley? She was cornered in an

first

remember? When I came to write it, I thought the street outside her house would

WILF

alley,

Get away.
scarier. But I was wrong. It feels odd, leaving her unconscious in an open street. She's

be

parked enough. More importantly, she feels like she's moved now, since 4.17. That's

not

Otherwise, she spends the first ten pages of 4.18 offstage, having moved all often

vital.

Trust your instincts. If you imagine a scene in an alley, then that's where it should

yards!

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL			

be.
 Probably.
 the Doctor, bruised and bloodied him.9 I'm so pleased you've done that. We never

I've got to stop now, because the whole story is about to go mental, and I haven't see the Doctor like that. And now we do.got the energy for that tonight. But I'm happier! It's still five or six pages too long, But poor Master! The Time Lords lodged the sound of drums in his mind as a kid,but I can monitor that. The line about why the Doctor was human back in 1999 is which he's endured for centuries and centuries, all so that he'd resurrect them one day,making me hoot, but that will be the first casualty. It's so indulgent - and yet true, in which he does (good Master!)... then when he asks them to take him with them, tomy opinion.

'into glory', blah, blah, blah, which is fair enough, frankly, the Lord President

around... and says no! What a bastard! 'You are diseased. Albeit a disease ofFROM:
 RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 2 MARCH 2009
 16:14:38 GMT our own
 creation.' What an utter, utter bastard! Cut the Master some slack, yeah? HeRE:
 4.18

Christmas on the streets. EATING TRAMPS!!! No wonder he comes over allI'm quite good at trimming as I go along, but the costs of this episode are going through righteous in the end, and shoots the Lord President in the face.the roof- and it's all so in-built into the story, I can't shift much. Very worried. Very,

very, very. Two plans of action. 1) I cut the whole multi-Master thing, so only his mind FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
 BENJAMIN COOK. TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 18:44:40 GMT

is inside every human being. They are him, but don't look like him. Not much of a RE: 4.18cliffhanger to 4.17, but there you go. (It still has the Time Lords returning, I suppose). Maybe I should just end it there, just before the regeneration. Tell Matt Smith I'veOr 2) I offer to pay for some of these FX myself. No, really. I've heard of writers doing changed my mind?! He he.that before, when budgets don't allow enough extras or whatever. (Although, I'm not

sure it's allowed at the BBC; only with independents.) I could put some of my fee back FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO:
 RUSSELL T DAVIES. TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 18:52:19 GMT

into the show. It would make me happy -- which is money well spent, in my

book.
now, I'll just carry on, I suppose. Oh, and who is the Woman? The Woman who appears to Wilf in the church at the

I'm so close to the end. That blissful Coffee Mania morning is getting closer, and top of 4.17, then again on TV during the Queen's Speech ('Only you can see,' she tells closer, and closer. Must not get run over! Wilf. 'Only you stand at the heart of coincidence'), and again onboard the Hesperus ('I

lost. So very long ago')... who is she? Are you prepared to say? When she appears
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 2 MARCH 2009 16:21:04 GMT

on TV in the Nobles' kitchen, and only Wilf can see her, she says, 'Tell the Doctor
RE: 4.18

of this. His life could still be saved. But only if you tell him nothing.' So, is»Must not get run over!«

the Doctor's guardian angel? Is that it? Or his mother? She's a Time Lady, isn't she? Which would be good advice on most days, actually. 'Lost' so long ago? And she turns up in the Gate Room during the stand-off between

Doctor, the Master, and the President...
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 18:08:31 GMT

RE:
4.18
PRESIDENT

final act of your life, is murder. But which one off just did 15 pages in one afternoon. Not bad. Unless the pages themselves are bad. us? Which would then be very bad. I've still got about 15 pages to go, on a script that

the Doctor.should probably be 60-or-so pages long. Ah well.

at the President.
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 18:41:28 GMT

aware, so aware, of the Master behind him.
RE: 4.18

Fantastic stuff! The Doctor with a revolver!8 Shocking and brilliant. And you've p***d Which one?

8 Aboard the Hesperus, Wilf offers the Doctor his old Second World War service revolver. The Master is going to kill you,' *Which one??* says Wilf. 'Then kill him first. Don't you deserve it?' 'Ohh yeah; replies the Doctor. 'I deserve it, absolutely! I so deserve to live.

Everything I've done, the lives I've saved, the people, the planets, every single star in the sky. So where is it, then? Just once.

Where's the reward?' At first, he refuses to take the gun; however, on learning of the Time Lords' plan to return, the Doctor 9 The Doctor jumps from the, Hespems as it flies over Naismith's mansion, falling through the glass roof of the Gate Room and changes his mind... culminating in a stand-off in the Gate Room between him, the Master and the Lord President. hitting the ground hard. He lands - cut and bruised, head swimming, suit torn - directly between the Master and the Lord

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

The Doctor, the agony.

scale in terms of thousands of monsters, but in personal terms. The intimate stuff

The
silence.
to become huge. So I sat down and wrote the Woman, on the spot. Invented her

and then. Half my head doubting it, thinking, this is a bit extreme. (Is she his

And
then...
Can she be? Really?!) The other half thinking, just keep writing and the story
The Doctor's eyes just flick a fraction to the
left. will make sense of it.
And it has.

and at the other end of the story, I'd always known, as an instinct, that I'd

As behind the
President... need
one Gallifreyan on the Doctor's side. I could never work out how to do it, but I
The FEMALE WEeping TIME LORD lowers her hands.¹⁰

that I needed someone there, at the end, to flick their eyes to one side, to tell the

where to aim the revolver. I can't remember a time when that idea wasn't there.

She looks
up.
couldn't know where to aim on his own. The Lord President intends to rip apart

Time Vortex, for the Time Lords to become creatures of consciousness alone, while
It's the WOMAN.

itself will cease to be. But the Doctor has a gun. The Doctor. The Master. The

On the
Doctor.
President. The choice. If he shoots the Master, the link with Gallifrey is broken

the pathway born from the Whitepoint Star. No more Time Lord resurrection. But
Recognising her. After all this
time. the Lord
President is part of that link, too. The Doctor could shoot him instead. What

he do? What. Should. He. Do?

Also, will the actress, when she's been cast, whoever she is, be told the Woman's
true

identity? Does she need to
know?

Woman stares at the Doctor. But then, her eyes flicker just

The

fraction to the right. Meaning, behind the Doctor.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. TUESDAY 3 MARCH
2009 19:15:54 GMT

the Master.

RE: 4.18

The Woman! I like leaving it open, because then you can imagine what you
want. And the Doctor pivots round, one
last time, switches the gun to

I think the fans will say it's Romana.¹¹ Or even the Rani.¹² Some might say
that it's his other hand, now aiming it right at
the Master.

Susan's mother, I suppose.¹³ But of course it's meant to be the Doctor's mother.
That's The Master terrified.

certainly what I'll tell the production team. Euros knows it already. David, too.
It

sounds a bit dumb, a bit sentimental, a bit rubbish when you confirm it. But
shame About to die.

on me, getting embarrassed about beautiful and heartfelt things...

Doctor's finger on the trigger.

It could only be his mother, really. If I can't imagine a world in which our
mothers

are there, at the end of our lives, in our time of need, to help us, then what's the
point? Tighter...

It'll never really happen, so I want to imagine it. I hadn't exactly planned it, though. In

then...

fact, I can remember, quite clearly, Wilf was going to enter the church in Scene 3, and

fall into conversation with a couple of strangers - a housewife and a young lad - all
So calm:

drawn there because of their bad dreams; then they realise, to their horror, that they've

all dreamt of the same thing. Spooky moment. End of scene. But as I went to write
DOCTOR

THE

out of the way.

that, I sort of faltered. It didn't have enough size. The more I thought about the Tenth

Doctor's departure, about David's departure, the more I needed to give it scale -- not
Beat, on the Master. Realising. And he falls to the side -

the DIAMOND-COMPUTER right behind him.¹⁴

10 Since the Time Lords voted to resurrect Gallifrey, two dissenters, one male, one female, have stood unmoving, with heads

bowed, their hands covering their faces, a ritual gesture of shame.

1 Time Lady Romana (played by Mary Tamm, and then Lalla Ward) travelled with the Fourth Doctor from 1978 to 1981.

1
the Doctor FIRES!

12 The Rani (played by Kate O'Mara) is a renegade Time Lady, an evil scientific genius, who encountered the Sixth and

Seventh Doctors, once apiece, during the 1980s.

14 The Master has placed the Whitepoint Star diamond into the centre of an adapted computer bank - in a red space, a

13 Susan (played by Carole Ann Ford) is the Doctor's granddaughter, and was his first on-screen companion, from 1963 to
receptacle, surrounded by a bed of wires - to transmit the Time Lords' signal back to Gallifrey and open the pathway to Earth.

1964.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

PRAC FX: THE DIAMOND-RED-SPACE
EXPLODES!! FX:
THE GAUNTLET shines with BLUE LIGHT, softly.

CAMERA SHAKE, going crazy! PRAC WIND BLASTS through the room -
! CU the Doctor

The Lord President, Chancellor & Time Lords in pain, battling
the wind, robes blowing - only the Male Weeping Time Lord
and Ready to die.
the Woman standing tall -

Lord President

TO:

cruel smile.

149. INT. BLACK VOID

then, on CU Doctor -

CO THE VISIONARY, screaming into CAMERA:15

Master steps in front of him.

VISIONARY

MASTER

- Gallifrey falling! Gallifrey faaaalls -
! Get out of the way.

TO: FX: The Master savage, SHOOTS ARCS OF ELECTRICITY FROM HIS

SKELETONING as he does so - !

150. EXT. FX SHOT. EARTH & GALLIFREY

The Lord President, wracked with ELECTRICITY, screaming -CU

FX: THE EARTH dwarfed, but GALLIFREY begins to FADE...

the Master, furious, righteous:

TO:

MASTER (CONT'D)

151. INT. THE GATE ROOM S WHITE VOID - NIGHT

did this to me! All of my life! You made me!

CAMERA SHAKE - WIND BLASTING, ferocious -

The Master walking forward, SKELETON FACE & REAL FACE

PRAC WHITE LIGHT beginning to flare, behind the TRIANGLE -
flickering, firing ARC after ARC
after ARC after ARC, his final

Two! Three! Four! -

THE DOCTOR

The link is broken! Go back into the Time War,
Rassilon! the Master walking into
the PRAC WHITE LIGHT and losing

Back into
Hell!
as he, the Lord President, the Time Lords DEFOCUS

the white -

CU LORD PRESIDENT, flinching against the wind, but still strong.

With all his strength, he lifts up his
GAUNTLET: The Doctor
horrified, shielding his eyes -

The Doctor stands
there. Last
to DEFOCUS is the Woman.

Terrified. But not
moving. She
smiles at him, so sadly.

LORD

PRESIDENT Then
all of them DEFOCUS into the whiteness, just shapes -

You'll die with me, Doctor.

SCREEN WHITE FLARE -

THE DOCTOR

I

know.

TO:

INT. THE GATE ROOM - NIGHT

LORD PRESIDENT

Then die forever.

DOCTOR. The White Void gone. The Gate back in place.¹⁵ The Visionary (female, 50, insane) - seen in the black void throughout Doctor Who 4.18 - is swathed in witch-like robes,

her face covered with henna tattoos, and she scribbles constantly on old parchments with a quill-like pen, muttering.

he falls to his knees.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL			

Exhausted.

ending.

Also, bear in mind, WE WILL NEVER AFFORD THIS! NEVER! Seriously. I

Long,

long

silence.

Then:

told Julie that I wanted to

put money into the FX, but she says that's forbidden by the

BBC.

Bollocks. (Unless she's just saying that to stop me from spending my own money.)

THE DOCTOR

I

think the Doctor will have to abandon the Hesperus, and just get the teleport working.

I 'm alive.

Damn.

Even when this script is done, it's far from over. That's a shame. Oh, I have to Poor Doctor.

Poor Woman. He needed someone to save him, in that moment, to think of

problems. put him back on the right path, to restore him. He's saved so many people; he needs

By the way, I cut the 1999 line. No loss! Silly reference - and kind of confusing, since saving this time. From himself. So the Woman became the Mother. Like, events are

most of the audience will remember the Doctor being human in Human Nature, rather so extreme, the universe so violated, that she's been summoned. I hadn't thought of

than the 1996 TV Movie. that when I started writing, but it fell into place. It took me 100+ pages to reach that Hmm, I don't know what to do. TV for a bit, I think. moment, and believe it myself, but I got there.

Actually, it goes right back to the Master in The Sound of Drums, saying that he was FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 3

MARCH 2009 19:33:38 GMT 'resurrected'. That's always preyed on my mind. I think an awful lot about the Time

RE: 4.18 War, actually, more than I'd ever quite realised - that it was so dark, so obscene, that Never mind TV. TV is rubbish! I think you should keep going. Yeah. the dead were walking, called back into life to fight the terrible fight. That's

why I was »I told Julie that I wanted to put money into the FX, but she says that's forbidden free to bring back Rassilon. (The Lord President is Rassilon!) And

that's why it felt by the BBC. «natural to bring back the Doctor's mother. I don't

imagine she's been alive all this time, Is it? Really?! Now, why? Surely there's a loophole? Can't you do it without telling but that, in the Time War, everyone was brought back to life. Horribly so. They've anyone? (No, obviously not. Definitely not. That would be bad.) Can't you donate it been there for a long time, in my head, all those dead

people, walking. to BBC Worldwide, who then give it back to you? What if you were to buy 50,000

There's a bit of Chris Rea in there, too. No, don't laugh. I think one of the scariest worth of merchandise? Yeah! Who'd stop you? (50,000's worth of Frubes! Imagine!

things ever is the prologue to 'The Road To Hell'. Before it gets all jaunty, there's an Now, that sounds like a party.) But tell Worldwide that you're only buying the goods

incredible, terrifying opening verse (often left out, when it's played) where he meets on the condition that they give you 50,000 towards the budget. Or something. In all

his dead mother on a highway, by the side of the road. I think she says something like, seriousness, if you want to donate your own money towards the budget, I can't imagine

'My fear for you has turned me in my grave.' Brrr! Really gets to me, that. It crept into a single licence-fee-payer objecting. Then again, there's one bastard in every crowd...

my subconscious. It came out in the writing, all on its own.

FROM:

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 19:56:09 GMT

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 19:20:47 GMT
DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

RE:

4.18

Miracle! It

turns out that Planet of the Dead might actually be 30,000 under budget.

The Doctor's mother was inspired by Chris Rea! / Well, she walked up to my quarterlight Hooray for the heaven-sent Tracie Simpson! That can't all go to FX for 4.17/4.18; it

/And she bent down real slow / A fearful pressure paralysed me / In my shadow.' As away of would have to be spread out among departments, because everyone's budget is tight

framing something a bit scary, that can't be beaten. on this one, but... well, it's a start.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2009 19:27:15 GMT
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 00:48:10 GMT

RE: 4.18

RE:

DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

'A fearful pressure paralysed me / In my shadow.' Isn't that brilliant? Once heard, never Hello! How's it going? Finished yet?

forgotten. In my shadow. In. Blimey. I wish the song had continued like that, but the

rest of it is all guitar-folky-road-movie-rock.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 00:50:29 GMT

I'm really not sure if I'll continue tonight. I'm tired! But the thought of waking up **DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!**

tomorrow with no script to write is very lovely. It's so wet and windy tonight that I can't You're there! Ha ha! I'm crying my eyes out here.

even go out for food. It's pissing down. Should I just carry on? I don't want to rush the

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE

TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

Four
times.FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES , WEDNESDAY 4
MARCH 2009 01:09:13 GMT

The
Doctor looks up.**RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!**

Me too. I haven't slept in like 40 hours. Long story. Stay up! I am! I'm not going
to *Tap-tap-tap-tap.*

bed until you send me more 4.18 script. Probably. I'm interviewing Michelle
Ryan Pause. Then again.tomorrow, but so what? This is very exciting.
(Should I resurrect the old catchphrase

Tap-
*tap-tap-tap.*from The Writer's Tale P. 'STAY! WHERE! YOU! ARE!')

And
all the joy drains out of the Doctor. All the hope. HisFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 01:17:56
GMT entire future, gone. As he realises. Slowly, he turns around.

Knowing
already what he'll see.**RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!**

Okay, here's the next bit. At last, the ridiculously overcomplicated glass booths
make WILF.16

sense... Still
in the glass booth. It was him; one more time, he taps

lightly
on the glass, one-two-three-four.

152. INT. THE GATE ROOM - DAY

Lights
flashing on the control panel behind Wilf. And now, slowly,

THE DOCTOR. Standing there. The White Void
gone. bring up the sound of an ALARM, a red alert; it's
been there from

the
top of the scene, but only now filtering into the Doctor's

And he falls to his
knees. consciousness.

Exhausted. Wilf
tries a little smile.

Then:

THE

DOCTOR
could let me out...?

They've gone, then. Good-oh. If you

I'm alive.

DOCTOR

He looks round. His hands. His face.
Legs! Yeah.

THE

DOCTOR

(CONT'D)

WILF

I survived! I didn't... I'm still alive! Ohhhhhhh.

thing seems to be making a bit of a noise. This

And he leans against a desk, so tired. The
Doctor strolls over. Quiet. Bitter.

So
happy.
DOCTOR

Master. He left the Nuclear Bolt running. And it's The

So very
happy. gone into
overload.

Hold on
him.

that's bad, is it? And

For a long time.

DOCTOR

And
then... No. Cos all
the excess radiation gets vented inside there.

Vinvocci glass. Contains it. All 50,000 rads that That's

So
quietly. are about

to flood into that thing.

Behind him.

16 In

Scene 148, as Gallifrey was resurrected, the staff of Naismith's mansion - technicians, guards, household staff (now

reverted

to their original, non-Master selves, the Lord President having broken the Master's control over them) -- ran for their

lives,

except for one technician, 'an ordinary bloke', who was trapped in the locked booth, hammering on the glass. Wilf

Tap-tap-tap-

tap.

rescued him - 'I've got you!' - by climbing into the open booth and locking the door, thereby releasing the door to the

technician's

booth, so he could escape. Throughout Scenes 148 to 150, Wilfred has been stuck in his booth, staring out of the

glass...

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DOCTOR TALE	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S CHAPTER TWENTY-
FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL			
	WILF		The Doctor's hand on
the door.			
Better let me out, then.			
			THE
DOCTOR			
	THE DOCTOR		Wilfred. It's my
honour.			
Except it's gone critical.	Touch	one	control. It
floods.	WILF		
	(of the sonic)		But you're better than
me.			
Even this. Would set it off.			
			THE
DOCTOR			
Silence.			Don't you ever say
that.			
			(pause,
deep breath)			
Wilf so upset.			You'll have to be
quick. Ready?			
	WILF		
			WILF
I'm sorry.			I refuse.
	THE DOCTOR		
			THE
DOCTOR			
Sure.			
			Three, two, one -
	WILF		
Just leave me.			The Doctor enters -
closes the door behind him - so fast -			
	THE DOCTOR		- slams the RED
BUTTON -			
	(furious)		

Okay! Right then! I will! Cos you had to go in there, - OPEN and LOCKED
 switch sides, the Doctor LOCKED -
 didn't you?! You had to go and get stuck, oh yes! Cos
 that's who you are, Wilfred. You were always this. Waiting - Wilf running out
 of OPEN -
 for me. All this time.

And FIERCE RED PRAC
 LIGHT, fills the LOCKED BOOTH. Burning. The
 WILF Doctor in agony.
 Wracked with pain.
 But really. Leave me. I'm an old man. Doctor. I've had my
 time. Wilf horrified. Right up
 against the glass.

THE DOCTOR The Doctor looks at
 him. Tries to smile.
 Well exactly! Look at you. Not remotely important. But me!
 I could do so much more. So! Much! More! But this is what More pain, worse,
 he sinks to his knees, yelling out -
 I get. My reward! And it's not... fair!!!

Bows his head. Curled up
 like a kid, in the red light.
 - *proper fury, turning away to lash out, kicking something* -
 so scared. Wilf stepping back, now,
 Then silence. Everything still.

And then the red light...
 Then quiet, calm:
 Just fades away.

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 Lived too long. The Doctor looks up.
 He walks back towards the OPEN BOOTH.
 Still himself.

WILF
 But his face is hollow
 now, haunted.
 ...don't, please Doctor, no don't, please don't, sir,
 please...

WILF

Hello.

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DOCTOR WHO's THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

THE DOCTOR

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 01:24:26 GMT FROM:
Hi.

DIE, DOCTOR, DIE! RE:

WILF I
have tea. I'm still typing. My cigarette count is now absurd.

Still with us?

The Doctor standing. He seems fine, just a bit dazed,
dislocated. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4
MARCH 2009 02:24:10 GMT

Taps a control. RE:
DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

I
had to send you this bit. Scene 155 is hilarious...

THE DOCTOR

System's dead. I absorbed it all. Whole thing's...
kaput. 151. INT. NOBLES' KITCHEN - DAY"

OPEN/LOCKED signs dead. He tries the door. It
opens. DONNA, unconscious on the settee. SHAUN at
her side, worried.18

SYLVIA
approaching, helpless, with a cuppa.

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Now it opens,
yeah.

no good, she's freezing. She was just lying there,

He walks
out. it's like
hypothermia. Try them again!

WILF

There we are then. Safe and sound. Mind you! You're in

what happened? I was... Did I miss something?

The Doctor accepting it, but not really hugging him back. Again?!

WIDE SHOT, the two men alone.

I can either face ten pages of the companions' farewells now, or go to bed. I'll make a cup 17 The deletion of two short scenes (15 and 18) of a Phone-Trace-Master, in a darkened Phone-Tracing Room, attempting to

track
Donna's phone call to Wilf, has shifted all subsequent scene numbers, so the Doctor rescuing Wilf from the glass booth

of tea and see... is
now Scene 150, followed by this, Scene 151, in the Nobles' kitchen.

18
Shaun Temple ('tall. 30s, a kind, handsome man1) is Donna's fiance. 'He's sweet enough,' says Wilf. 'Bit of a dreamer. But

he's
on minimum wage, she's earning tuppence, all they can afford is a tiny little flat.'

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DOCTOR	WHO!	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER TWENTY-
FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL			

And	Sylvia	hurries	out,	so	happy	-
				MARTHA		

					Looks like you need	
help. Besides, you're the one who						
				CUT TO:	persuaded me to go	
freelance.						

152.	EXT.	NOBLES'	STREET	-
DAY			MICKEY	

					Yeah, but we're getting	
fired at! By a Sontaran! A dumpling						

SYLVIA stepping out. For once, delighted to see -				with a gun! This is
no place for a married woman!				

THE TARDIS. A good distance away, down the street. THE DOCTOR				
&		MARTHA		

WILF standing outside it, the Doctor now in a clean, undamaged				
brown suit. Sylvia waves, all smiles.				Well then. You
shouldn't have married me.				

CUT TO the Doctor & Wilf, the Doctor more his old self.				And Martha Smith-
Jones moves round, next to Mickey.				

THE DOCTOR			CUT TO POV from
high up inside the factory. SONTARAN POV, the			

Oh, she's smiling. As if today wasn't strange enough.			hairlines of a gun.
Targeting:			

Anyway! Don't go thinking this is goodbye! I'll see you			
in six days' time.			Martha & Mickey
together, down below. They're not looking this			

			way, talking, in hiding,
reckoning that the Sontaran is in a			

	WILF		completely different
direction.			

Why, what happens then?			
			REVERSE on the
Sontaran, with his gun. COMMANDER JASK.			

THE DOCTOR			
Wilf! Think about it!			He readies his weapon.

WILF Rifle POV. Target
 zooming in on Martha.
 But where are you going?
 Her forehead.
 THE DOCTOR
 Jask licking his lips.
 About to fire...
 To get my reward.
Bonk!
 And he steps into the Tardis. On the door - slam - !
 Jask blinks. Then falls
 down out of frame, unconscious.
 CUT TO:
 Behind him, THE
 DOCTOR. With a mallet.
 153. EXT. ABANDONED FACTORY - DAY
 CUT BACK TO Mickey
 and Martha, consulting a blueprint.
 PRAC SQUIBS EXPLODING on the ground! Bang! Bang! Bang! Someone
 runs through them - feet, running, running, running -
 MICKEY
 Cos I think, if we go in
 here, get to the factory floor,
 MARTHA. Gunfire, explosions at her feet - she keeps going -
 down that corridor, he
 won't know we're there -
 It's all cement and weeds, the open area of an abandoned factory;
 MARTHA
 tall, decaying buildings all around. Martha running to a hiding-
 Mickey.
 hole, a small corner of ruined walls -
 She's looking up, he
 follows her eyeline.
 - she ducks down, joining -
 Far above, far away,
 framed full-length in an open space, the
 MICKEY SMITH! With a gun & backpack.

them.

Doctor is looking down at

MICKEY

look at him, he looks at them.

Hold the moment. They

I told you to stay behind!

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DOCTOR TALE	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S CHAPTER
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL Then the Doctor walks back into the factory, gone. LUKE It's him! They stay staring up. The noise of the Tardis fills the air. And somehow, they just know he was saying goodbye. And she looks down the street. MICKEY The TARDIS a long way off. The Doctor a distant figure. But he stops at the door. Hey. Pulling Martha to him. Together. Both so sad. Looks at her. Gives a single wave. Then steps inside. On CUT TO: Sarah Jane & Luke; sound of the Tardis fills the air. And 154. EXT. BANNERMAN ROAD - DAY Sarah Jane is crying. Because she knows. LUKE SMITH, sauntering along, on his mobile, cheery - CUT TO: LUKE 155. EXT. ALIEN BAR - NIGHT - but that was the maddest Christmas ever, Clyde! Mum still doesn't know what happened. But she got Mr Smith CAPTAIN JACK HARKNESS sits all alone, at the bar. Deep in to put out this story, saying that Wi-Fi went mad, all thought. He's lost so much, and found nothing. across the world, giving everyone hallucinations! I mean, how else are you going to explain it? Everyone with a Around him, incredible life, in a dark, downtown drinking hole different face! in the Horsehead Nebula. Aliens galore! TWO SLITHEEN. Some HATH. MR & MRS PAKOO.19 A masked SYCORAX. A GRASKE. JUDOON. And MONK & He's laughing away, crossing the road - not looking - NUN-TYPE extras.			

FX: A VESPIFORM flies past, an ADIPOSE waddles

across the counter.

Luke foreground, A CAR SPEEDING TOWARDS HIM -

Then the barman

slides a piece of paper over to Jack.

- a hand reaches out -

- pulls Luke back, out of the road - !
over there.

From the man

The car zooms past. And Luke, shaken, finds himself staring at
Looks up.

Jack's puzzled.

THE DOCTOR. Who's glaring at him, in a don't-cross-the-road-

using-your-mobile kind of way.

Far across the bar,

THE DOCTOR. Just standing there.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Jack smiles, a

little, but stays where he is. Knows something's

But it's you! You're...!
paper, what's this?

different. Holds up the

But the Doctor just walks away. Fast.
nods, open it.

The Doctor just

Luke goes belting towards 13 Bannerman Road -

Jack does so.

LUKE (CONT'D)

A handwritten

note, saying:

Mum! Mum - !

His name is Alonso.

SARAH JANE comes running round the corner, almost colliding -

Jack looks up again.

. SARAH JANE

What is it?!
were giant bird-like background aliens in Doctor Who 1.2.

19 Mr and Mrs Pakoo

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The Doctor nods, to his left.

RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 03:52:55 GMT	FROM:
---	-------

The man sitting next to Jack, also on his own, turns around.	RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!
--	-----------------------

It's	MIDSHIPMAN
FRAME.	One more page to go!

Jack smiles at the Doctor. Gives him a salute. Farewell.

INT. BOOKSHOP - DAY	156.
---------------------	------

The Doctor gives that little salute back. Then turns away, into

Waterstone's-type shop. A queue of PEOPLE, for a book signing.	A
the shadows, gone.	

for the book on display, a blown-up cover: A Journal	Advertising
As the sound of the Tardis echoes away in the distance,	
Jack	<i>of Impossible Things, by Verity Newman.</i>
turns to Midshipman Frame.	

queue leading to VERITY, sitting at a table, a stack of	The
CAPTAIN	

JACK	books next to her. She is the image of
Joan Redfern (eps 3.8 &	
	3.9).

She's chatting to a customer, as she signs.

So, Alonso. Going my way?

MIDSHIPMAN FRAME	...it's
not just a story, every word of it is true. I found	
How	d'you
name?	know
diary in the loft. And she was a	my great grandmother's

nurse,

in 1913, and she fell in love with this man, called

CAPTAIN

JACK John Smith. Except he was a visitor. From
another world.

She

fell in love with a man from the stars. And she wrote

I'm kinda psychic.

it

all down.

MIDSHIPMAN FRAME

Customer

moves off, next one moves in foreground

she

Really? D'you know what I'm thinking right
now? automatically takes the book, doesn't look up.

CAPTAIN

JACK VERITY (CONT'D)

Oh

yeah. And who's it
for?

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 03:31:10
GMT MAN

The

Doctor.**RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!**

I'm here! I'm awake! Did you miss me? (What do you mean 'no?') All right, I
admit VERITYit, I just grabbed two-and-half-
hours' kip. Well, I don't want to look too grisly and To... the Doctor...sleep-
deprived for Michelle Ryan. But I awake to none other than
MIDSHIPMAN (adds her name)

Funny,

that was the name he used.FRAME! For it is he! Ha ha ha ha ha ha... and 'ha ad infinitum.
'D'you know what

I'm thinking right now?' 'Oh yeah!' Brilliant. Definitely worth waking up for. P.S.
I'm And as she hands the book back, she looks up.on the Red Bull already.

THE

DOCTOR standing here.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 03:39:48 GMT

And

she's breathless.**RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!**

Welcome back! I thought of the Midshipman Frame bit on the spot. Literally, as

DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE CHAPTER
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

THE

DOCTOR

MINNIE

Was she happy? In the
end? I'm gonna catch the bouquet!

VERITY

Minnie

runs off, gleeful. But Sylvia is looking across...

Yes. Yes she was.

Dad.

Hold the silence.

Wilf

looks.

VERITY (CONT'D)

Were you?

Far

away, outside the church: THE DOCTOR, and the TARDIS.

He gives a small smile. Takes the book. Walks away.

JUMP

CUT TO Wilf & Sylvia, hurrying up to the Doctor.

CUT TO:

There

now, same old face. Didn't I say you'd be fine? Oh!

157 EXT. CHURCH - DAY

And

they arrested Mr Naismith! It was on the news. Crimes

undisclose

No mention of any Gate, I bet those cactuses

Confetti! Church bells! People smiling, laughing,
throwing took it away. I liked those two.

confetti as the Bride and Groom, DONNA and SHAUN TEMPLE-
NOBLE (beat)

come out of a perfect picture-book

church.
The Time Lord. Who was

But you never told me. That woman.

she?

She's never been so happy. The biggest smile! JUMP

The

Doctor just looks. At Wilf. At Sylvia. At Donna, in the

CUT to Donna & Shaun, lining up for photos -
distance. Friends, mothers, brides.

DONNA

He's

not saying.

- come on, you lot, get in, this photo's just with friends,

I want all of you in, that's it. And you! Friends,
and

THE DOCTOR

Nerys.20
wanted to give you this.

Just

(everyone laughs)

He

hands Wilf an envelope.

Only joking! Look at her!

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

NERYS

Wedding

present. Thing is, I never carry money. So I just

You made me wear
peach. popped back in time,
borrowed a quid off a really lovely

man.

Geoffrey Noble, his name was. Have it, he said. Have

DONNA

that

on me.

Because you are a peach. Furry skin, stone inside, going

off.

On

Wilf and Sylvia. Overwhelmed.

CUT TO WILF & SYLVIA, standing a distance back, in all
their JUMP CUT TO Wilf, a little shaken, back inside the
churchyard

finery, smiling. MINNIE is there too, all
saucy. with Donna 4 guests, handing her the envelope
-

MINNIE

Oh,
don't tell me, it's a bill! Just what I need, right
What d'you think then, Wilfred? Never too
late! now!

it, to find:)

WILF A
lottery ticket! What a cheap present! Who was that?!

Oh, give up,
woman! Still, you never know,
I might get lucky!

And
she tucks it down her cleavage, runs off, to Shaun -

20 Donna's friend Nerys (played by Krystal Archer) appeared in Doctor Who 3.X.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

CHAPTER

TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

DONNA

(CONT'D)

Oy! Shaun! We're on a schedule, oxtail soup at 2.30 sharp!

ROSE

Happy new year!

And they hug.

But stay on Wllf, with Sylvia. Both knowing what this means.

Then head off, different

ways. Calling back:

Both overjoyed. And starting to cry.

ROSE

(CONT'D)

They look across.
night!

And don't stay out all

The
Tardis.

Doctor,

and

the

JACKIE

Try and stop me!

He turns and goes.

And Rose walks on, alone.

Wilfred, crying, with confetti in the air, salutes him.

A good distance away,

watching, from the shadows. THE DOCTOR.

CUT TO: Silent. In the snow. His

face in darkness.

158. EXT. TYLERS' ESTATE - NIGHT Snow. Falling
see him, just walking on by...

She doesn't even

through the air. Against black.
Pain. Can't help gasping, ow!

But then he winces.

Coming down to find the ground-floor courtyard, covered in snow. She stops. Looks across. A bit wary, keeps her distance.

A bell is tolling in the distance. Midnight.

ROSE

No one around except a girl and her mother, walking along
mate?

You all right,

together. ROSE TYLER, and JACKIE. Niggling!

THE

DOCTOR

ROSE

Yeah.

I'm late now, I missed it, it's midnight. Mickey's gonna be
calling me everything.

That's your

fault!

ROSE

Too much to drink?

JACKIE

It's not, it's Jimbo, he said he'd give us a lift, then

he

THE DOCTOR

said his axle broke, I can't help it!

Something like that.

ROSE

ROSE

Maybe it's time you

went home.

Get rid of him. Mum, he's useless.

THE

DOCTOR

JACKIE

Yeah.

Listen to you! With a mechanic! Be fair though, my time of
life, I'm not gonna do much better.

Pause.

They stop,

a

little

kinder:

ROSE

Anyway. Happy new

year.

ROSE

Oh, don't be like that. You never know. Could be someone

out

THE DOCTOR

there.

And you.

JACKIE

She's about to turn and

go, but -

Maybe. One day. Happy new year.

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			CHAPTER
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL			
the snow. OOD SIGMA.			Standing far away, in
	THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)		
What year is this? soaring.			The song rising,
	ROSE		The Doctor gaining
strength from it.			
Blimey, how much did you have? It's 2005.			
			OOD
SIGMA			
	THE DOCTOR		We will sing to
you, Doctor. We will sing you to your			
2005. Tell you what. I bet you're going to have a really			sleep.
great year.			
			And the Doctor...
And she smiles, just liking him.			
			Stands.
	ROSE		
Yeah.			The song all around
him, now.			
	(pause)		
			OOD
SIGMA (CONT'D)			
See ya.			This song is
ending. But the story.	The story never		
			ends.
And Rose Tyler walks away.			
walking.			And the Doctor keeps
The Doctor is left alone.			
			To the Tardis.
He turns, starts to walk.			
In the distance: the TARDIS.			FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009
04:00:11 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

As he walks, he loses the pretence. He's in so much pain.
writing in Rose and Jackie! But it's the line about Geoffrey Noble
Dragging his feet. Every step.

So, that's how you're

done Howard Attfield proud.

that really got me. You've

He winces, sharp pain, owl

FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 05:52:15
GMT

Tries to keep going.

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

Walking through the show.

Here you go. Finished.

Well, I'll get some sleep, and go through it all again before

sending it to the office, so

this is the raw version...

Then it really hits him. Agony. He falls to his knees. Desperate.

NIGHT

159. INT. TARDIS -

And so alone.

THE DOCTOR steps

inside, exhausted.

He heaves for breath. Can't find the strength.

He stops by the doors,

rests against them, lifts his hand.

He could die, right here.

FX: the faint GOLDEN

GLOW.

But then...

Then he walks up the

ramp. Still surrounded by Ood-song, the

A song.
swelling all around him.

unearthly choir

A familiar song. Drifting in through the night.

He reaches the

console. Clicks a few switches.

The Song of the Ood.
Rotor rise and fall.

Watches the Time

The
up.
TO:

Doctor

looks

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
 TALE
 CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

160. FX SHOT. TARDIS & EARTH

He snaps upright, ENERGY BURNING AWAY, fast, gone!

FX: THE TARDIS gently circling above the
 EARTH. And there he is.
 Blinking. Dazed.

CUT

TO: The New Man.

161. INT. TARDIS -
 NIGHT
 TO:

The song continues. THE DOCTOR at the
 console. 162. EXT. FX SHOT.
 TARDIS & EARTH

More pain. Fights it off. But it's time.
 He FX: THE TARDIS
 sparking & smoking, wrecked, spiralling down

EARTH, fast, faster, Cloister Bell tolling -
 stands back. Closer to the ramp. Ready, but

TO:
 never ready for this. Then, quietly:

INT. TARDIS - NIGHT

THE DOCTOR

SHAKE! Tardis shuddering! Alarms! FLAMES all around!

I don't want to
 go. SMOKE!
 PRAC DEBRIS falling from the roof!

And then, slowly...

Doctor stands in the howling chaos.

FX: CO THE DOCTOR, as gently, a shroud of calm GOLDEN GLOW
rises
Reborn.
up around his head, his features still visible.

OF EPISODE 4.18

FX: MID-SHOT DOCTOR, lifting his GLOWING HANDS, in amazement,
his face still visible within its glow.

now I move to America. HOLY SHIT!!!

And then, a sudden acceleration, wham - !

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009
06:00:17 GMT

FX: THE DOCTOR VOLCANOES!!! LONG SHOT, GOLDEN ENERGY
blasting
RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

out of his head, his arms - beautiful, ferocious -
Oh my God. That's it. That's really it.

Nice one, Russell! I mean that.

has a question been more pertinent than this, but... um, how do you feel?

FX: GOLDEN ENERGY from one arm - ripping into the console -

MASSIVE PRAC EXPLOSIONS, the whole thing going up -
!
(Are you off to Coffee Mania? Is it even
open yet?!)

FX: GOLDEN ENERGY from the other arm, rips down the ramp -

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 06:05:29 GMT

BLASTING THE DOORS, a MASSIVE SHEET OF FLAME flaring
up!
RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

I feel strangely anticlimactic. I thought there'd be whiskey and hookers, at

PRAC FX: the door-windows shatter out!

in my head. Zeppelins and elephants, as Hazel said in a deleted scene of Queer

FX: CRANING UP, WIDE SHOT, ENERGY still BLASTING OUT OF
THE
*as Folk 2. I think it's the budget
that's worrying me. I think this is going to be a*

DOCTOR - PRAC FLAMES erupting all around, up through the

floor!
of problems. Ah well. Hey, I'm done!

nightmare. It feels like handing in a bunch

He's standing in the middle of an inferno!

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009
06:08:17 GMT

The Cloister Bell tolling!21

DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!FX: CU the Doctor's head, GOLDEN ENERGY
streaming out, his Is Steven writing
Matt's first lines, to be inserted into the final scene? Or won't the features finally
disappearing... A new face
forming... Eleventh Doctor speak
until Series Five, Episode 1?

21 The TARDIS Cloister Bell tolls, in the manner of a heavy church bell, to warn the crew
of impending disaster.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FOUR: THE ROAD TO HELL

on e-mail, at this time of night. Oh, yes, there he is, at 00.48, saying hello. I

wonder to **THE** **FINAL**
SCRIPT

him
if I should keep going? 01.09, he says, 'Stay up! I am!' But then, no more. Maybe

he's
fallen sleep, maybe he's out gallivanting. So. Just me. Originally published in Doctor Who Magazine 407, Russell describes the

This
is always the best time to work. And for contemplation, too. [...] These are rewriting of his final Doctor Who scenes...

funny
old times. We spend a lot of time looking forward - Planet of the Dead is almost The birds go mad at night, in Cardiff Bay. Something sets them off, around two finished, and yes, I'm an HD convert, it's looking gorgeous, with James Strong's mosto'clock, and yet always at a slightly different time. A huge flock of seagulls rises beautiful work yet. And beyond that, three more Specials, making ferocious demands up, alt squawking and cawing. The noise is massive; I often go out and look. Lights on the team. But you can't help starting to look back, at the same time. Four series,

come on in the Big Hotel. Silhouettes step out onto balconies, to gaze up at the five years - no, more, I started work on this in 2003. That's seven years now, blimey!

sky. You can't see anything, against the dark. The invisible flock. Perhaps it's a trick We time-travel so much in our heads that I think we're getting out of sync. The other

week,
Julie went to her school reunion... but turned up a week too early! Then, the of the sound; they might be far out at sea, or circling the city. It's slightly sinister;

other
day, I was about to go to the cast and crew screening of Torchwood:

Childrensomewhere. Daphne du Maurier is smiling. But the almighty squall echoes round and

of
Earth, Episode 1... but no, that's nexf week, seven days out again! That TARDIS
hasround the Bay, then just as suddenly, stops.

been
messing with us.

They soared and cawed tonight, but that was hours ago, I'm sitting here, at my

Enough
introspection. Work! Come on! I rattle away on the keyboard, and the wordsdesk, the empty Bay still glittering with lights below me, and I'm about to write the

fly
out. That's not a surprise. I've had these last pages ready in my head for monthslast words of my last episode. Truth be told, I wasn't going to work tonight. I got

and
months. Years, to be honest. It takes as long to write as it does to type. Well, niceahead of myself this afternoon - for once! - and I've got no meetings tomorrow,

sentence,
but it's not quite true. Lots of new thoughts pile in, as it all becomes thatleaving me plenty of time to finish. Except... a script never quite leaves your head.

bit
more real. A new thrill. A new gag! And lots of unexpected problems crop up. Ah,It ticks away, no matter what you're doing. I watched TV for a bit, but it just felt like

love
a good problem. So, I keep rattling away, until...heads, yapping. My mind was somewhere else, with the Gate, and Naismith, with the

The
last words.words 'partisan', 'carnival', 'Beijing' and the phrase 'Something is coming.' Still. Time

to spare.
Tomorrow. Trouble
is, last words don't really exist. In ten minutes' time, I'll change my mind

But then! A sign! Out of the blue, a text, from lovely Mark Gatiss. Quite by chance, about Scene 25, and go back to write something different.

Then I'll get up tomorrow,

he's just been watching Rose, and texts to say how much he enjoyed it, all these and change all sorts of stuff, before sending it to the office. And then the proper

years later, bless him. Hmm, my first episode, my last episode. The beginning, and rewrites start. Rewrites to make it better, clearer, shorter. Cheaper! Rewrites during the end. And then, I swear, right in that second, I flick channels, randomly finding BBC filming, as budgets or locations shift and change. Even after the whole thing's been

Three. And there's Mark! Wolfing down canapes, in The Lazarus Experiment! Okay. shot, there's the ADR script, for dubbing (the very last thing you type tends to be a

There are no signs and portents, except the ones we make, and that'll do me. This is guard shouting 'Look out!' or something). Even then, you keep writing; you think of

a Doctor Who night. Back to work. lines that people should have said, for the rest of your life. Still, what the hell, let's

Elsewhere in Cardiff, production hasn't stopped. Things keep pinging, on e-mail. allow a bit of ceremony. The last words.

At 22.46, there's Ed's photos of the 4.16 studio sets. Wow. Blimey, Best yet! No, really, Maybe I should sit here for hours, deliberating over them. But I know exactly what

seriously, amazing, the sort of set we've never done before. Then, at 23.44, there's they are. I type them out. Times like this, typewriters would be better. Typewriters are

Nikki, signing off from the night-shoot. 'Possibly the maddest day of my career. No, romantic. A little metal letter should fly. It should hit the paper, whack! Tiny particles

the maddest day of my life!' She's not wrong. Wait till you see it! Far across the world, of ink should puff and settle. But no, there's just a plastic keyboard. I press the key.

Julie has just arrived in LA, house-hunting, so it's daytime for her. She's working, of The final letter is 'n'. Then a full stop.

course, watching rushes on her laptop, e-mailing her verdict. 'That corridor looks And that's it. Save. Done. Good.

amazing! Graeme is on fire!' (Not literally, that would be terrible.) And

then silence. No

with kind permission

e-mails, no phone calls, no texts. Twitter's probably busy, but I have enough trouble

with social networking in real life. Ben Cook of this very magazine is usually around,

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 06:12:49 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

Yes, it's over to Steven, if he wants the Eleventh Doctor to have a first line. Last time he mentioned it, he didn't think he'd need one, but I'll let him read it and make up his mind.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 4 MARCH 2009 10:43:58 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

A few hours later, and I'm still feeling quite disconnected. No great high, no great low. I'm surprised, because I thought I'd be cartwheeling. Shame, though, I wanted that Coffee Mania moment. I haven't actually been to Coffee Mania yet. Maybe it'll all happen there. Oh, I wish there was a party tonight. I'm going to go over 4.18 one last time, dot the 'i's, cross the 't's, and deliver.

Text message from: Russell

Sent: 4-Mar-2009 11:30

I'm in the Bay! Finally, my Coffee Mania moment. And it's beautiful. Not

bad. Not bad at all.

Text message from: Ben

Sent: 4-Mar-2009 11:33

Some men want gold, some want power, others want sex... you just want Coffee Mania! Good luck to you.

Text message from: Russell

Sent: 4-Mar-2009 11:36

I still want sex, with the man behind the counter. This will not happen,

strangely. But I have the gold and the power already, so two out of

three ain't bad.

Text message from: Ben

Sent: 4-Mar-2009 11:37

Right Still, nice coffee?

Text message from: Russell

Sent: 4-Mar-2009 11:40

The best!

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CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE
THE FINAL
CHAPTER

In which middle-aged men end up crying in
Boots,

blue breast-enhancers are the new pink,
and Russell pirouettes for the Eleventh Doctor

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2009 14:17:29 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

I have nothing to do now.

Do you want any shelves putting up? A garden to
mow?

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2009 14:32:08 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

I've a roof gutter that needs cleaning.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2009 14:36:14 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

That'll do.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 5 MARCH 2009 14:53:25 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

I just got a text off John Simm. He's read 4.17. 'Ha ha
haaaaagh!!!' I think that means

he likes it. David left a message on my answerphone
last night, after reading 4.18. He

Scheduled				
DR WHO IV EP 17+18 SHOOTING SCHEDULE - DATED 26/3/09				
DAY 1 - MONDAY 30TH MARCH: 9.30am - 8.30pm				
LOCATION: TREDEGAR HOUSE, NEWPORT				
17/79	INT	NAISMITH'S STABLES The Doctor and Wilf step out	Day 4 5/8 pg	1, 3
17/77	INT	NAISMITH'S STABLES Tardis materialises	Day 4 1/8 pg	
17/79a	EXT	NAISMITH'S MANSION The Doctor and Wilf sneak into cellar	Day 4 3/8 pg	1, 3
18/144	EXT	NAISMITH'S MANSION Everyone runs from house looking up to see Gallifrey	Dusk 2/8 pg	5, 8, 9, 10
17/9	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY Naismith's have photo taken.	Day 2 3/8 pg	8, 9, 10
17/38	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY Naismiths watch footage of burning building	Day 3 2/8 pg	8, 9, 10
17/40	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY Naismiths optimistic over sight of figure	Day 3 3/8 pg	8, 9, 10
18/73	EXT	NAISMITH'S MANSION The Master runs out to see meteor streak fall to Earth	Night 3/8 pg	4, 2
End Day # 1 Monday, March 30, 2009 -- Total Pages: 2 6/8				
DAY 2 - TUESDAY 31ST MARCH: 8.30am - 7.30pm				
17/66	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY The Master bound up. Abigail see's skeleton through polaroid glasses.	Day 4 5/8 pg	2, 5, 9, 10
18/5	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY The Doctor now strapped to trolley	Day 4 3/8 pg	1, 2, 3
18/8pt	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY The Master receives reports	Day 4 1/8 pg	2
18/12	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY Wilf's mobile rings. Its Donna	Day 4 1 2/8 pg	1, 2, 3
18/13pt	INT	NAISMITH'S - STUDY The Master orders to trace the call	Day 4 2/8 pg	1, 2, 3

sounded both happy and sad. That's good, then. Mission accomplished.

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DOCTOR, DIE!

It's all ending, isn't it? Aren't you even a little bit sad? not
working alone. The whole point is to find actors like David and Bernard, actors

who
can do anything, actors who, literally, inspire me. They make writing challenging, FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 6 MARCH 2009 12:04:40 GMT

and
brave, and wonderful. Put those two in a room, and I think I can write anything.

Anything.
Which feels brilliant. RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

Am. I.
Sad? Oh, and
Addams, too. I know she hardly matters, but she's important to me. I

That's the question! Everyone is asking me. Julie is hilarious. Her version of Are
you love Addams. There is something so vivid and right about her. I absolutely love
thatsad?' Is Are you sad? You are, aren't you? Why won't you tell me? Is everything all
right? woman, Sinead Keenan, who plays Russell Tovey's girlfriend, Nina, in Being
Human}Do you want to talk about it? I'm sad, are you? Are you okay? Seriously, really,
what's I think she's a stunning talent, and I found myself writing Addams as her. It's
not

often
I do that, write for a specific actor, but she's an inspiration. She's so good. And wrong?' She
makes me hoot.

lo
and behold, she's free, so we've cast her. She's a cactus! Again, that whole process

Anyway, am I sad? I'm really, really not. And I've been thinking about it. Genuinely,
I've been testing myself, because we don't always know what we feel, and that's
why feels vindicated. That's the word. I feel vindicated. I feel like I got it right.
That's more

arrogant
than I usually sound -- all wracked with self-doubt, etc. But I don't think it's middle-aged men
end up crying in Boots, and sometimes hanging themselves from

the banister. But no. I don't. I feel happy. (No one but no one has asked me, Are
you arrogant; it's just true. It goes hand in hand with all the doubt, and always
has. happy?' I'm not sure what that says about us!) That column for Doctor Who
Magazine, So, I'm not sure what I should feel sad about. Leaving? But I
wouldn't leave if I didn't in which I describe writing my final scenes, is all sentimental,
because that's easy to want to. Finishing? But I finished well! Leaving the people?
That's tricky, because I love write. It's like a Hallmark card. 'The birds go mad at night, in
Cardiff Bay.' My arse this team, but I haven't really had time to socialise with
people. I don't go drinking that's how I felt! I felt tired, and excited that I could actually
deliver the script. I think with them. Never have. I never really want to. I'm a bit odd that
way, maybe... am I? the episode is sad. I'll be crying in drat final Dub, for the Doctor, for all of
them. It's I'm happy being a bit of a recluse. tempting to say that I put all the sadness into

the work, but that's just cod-psychology. I do wonder how people see me. Steven wrote to me asking if I was sad (briskly, likeNo, it's sad because that's the right story to tell. 1 In BBC Three drama Being Human, Russell Tovey plays a werewolf called George, and Sinead Kennan plays his girlfriend.

So, I feel... good. I think that 4.18 script is excellent. Not in all areas, never in all Nina.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

you did, like a man!), but followed it up with, 'I know you won't feel a thing, you big actor? It's supposed to be Joan Redfern's great granddaughter, Verity, isn't it?Welsh glacier.' Ha ha. But it took me aback for a second. Is that how people think of Alternatively, couldn't the Doctor visit Elton Pope from Love & Monsters? Or betterme? I think I was really taken aback because I rather liked it. Interesting. Or is that still - a nice contrast with the other cameos - Jackson Lake? Yeah! Bring back Davidawful?!
now living the life of a proper Victorian adventurer.

Brrrr, I don't know. If I find myself crying in Boots, I'll let you know. Maybe the bottom line is, I just care about myself. But doesn't everyone? Is that strange?
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK.
TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2009 20:10:46 GMT

Love,
Glacier
DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

The
RE

I did think that she doesn't need to be the same actor, technically - and yet itFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 6 MARCH 2009 16:07:46 GMT
sort of loses something. The conceit sort of makes it work somehow. Hmm, I don'tRE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

All the other characters - even Jackson Lake - don't really have any unfinishedYou'll have to get used to everyone asking whether you're sad to be leaving. Maybe business. The whole thing works because of Verity's final 'Were you?' to the Doctor.I'll print you a T-shirt that reads 'I'm not sad to be leaving. Now stop worrying, and Then again, the thought of the Doctor walking in on Elton and Ursula's sex lifeenjoy your life.' Or one that says 'Please stop asking me if I'm all right...' on the front could be rather marvellous.3 Poor Ursula. Or lucky Ursula.and 'Now piss off!' on the back. But I don't think it's odd that you're not sad. I think

you'd be sad if you stayed on for another year. Or sad if you'd been pushed instead of
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SATURDAY 14 MARCH 2009 15:10:25 GMT

jumped. Or if the show weren't continuing. Or if it weren't in safe hands. But I can see
RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!why you're happy, and I'm glad.
Then again, if you do burst into tears in Boots, at least I have to lose 204 FX days from 4.17/4.18. Here we go again! Plus, 4.18 is still aboutthey sell tissues.
minutes too long. But I give up. For now.

te

was offered another of Steven's Series Five scripts to read today... and I refused.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2009 01:48:20 GMT

That's enough now. I don't want to know any more. I want it to be a surprise.RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

I'm

popping to Swansea tomorrow, to tell my family I'm off to LA. Should be fun.Christ almighty, I've only just got in! Now! We had the 4.18 Tone Meeting from 3pm

to 7pm, and then we had to go into the Edit to lock Planet of the Dead, literally having

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 15 MARCH 2009 18:42:10 GMTto stay until it was done. Normally, you sit there and give notes, like, 'Give me a closer

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!reaction on the Doctor there, and can that line be on a two-shot?', etc, then swan off,

Are you back from Swansea yet? What did your family make of your plans?and come back to see the results the next day. But, because transmission is so tight,

we had to give notes tonight, and sit there until they were done, including tricky FX

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 15 MARCH 2009 18:48:56 GMTsequences. Oh, my eyes! I have brain-ache. Poor Mike Jones - imagine having to edit

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!in front of people. That would be like me having four people sitting behind me while I

My sisters were happy and excited. That was nice. They're good girls, really. Even my dadtype! Or like someone monitoring everything that I'm writing, all the time, every day

wasn't too bad. 'You'll never work in this country again,' he said. 'You'll be forgotten.'of the... Oh.

Actually, it would have been my mum's 80th today, so everyone was in a sort of

nostalgic mood. Unusually quiet, for my lot!FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2009 18:02:27 GMT

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 15 MARCH 2009 18:53:56 GMTJessica Hynes is off to Broadway, before we even start filming 4.17/4.18.2 Bollocks!

RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

that must be a relief. Except for the 'You'll never work in this country again' bit,FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2009 19:19:16 GMT

but that's not true. Wales would welcome you back with open arms, any day. Oh,RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

unless

he meant England. Yeah, you're finished in England.Isn't that the one end-of-episode cameo for which you don't have to cast the original

*At the end of Doctor Who 2.10, Elton reveals that he and his girlfriend Ursula (played by Shirley Henderson), who was killed*²*In the event, a day's filming was brought forward to 21 March in order to record Hynes' scene befo-e she left the UK. but reconstructed by the Doctor as a living section of pavement, enjoy 'a bit of a love life'.*

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 16 MARCH 2009 23:02:11 GMT
 days or so. I'm really, truly feeling 45. My knee aches for no good reason at all. It's **RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!** killing me. I think

I'm actually walking slower. Still, only natural after all this work. Tomorrow's weird. I'm in London for lunch with John Simm, Euros Lyn and Julie,
 It's a deserved tiredness. but then, in the evening, I have to give a speech at BAFTA about Children's TV. I only

agreed because CBBC has been so brilliant about our Sarah Jane Adventures budget.
 FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 20 MARCH 2009 04:01:18 GMT

They've moved heaven and Earth to fund us... but then asked me to do this. That's a **RE: THE LAST TONE** big subject, and I've given it no thought. Paul Abbott once had to give a talk at some You're still up? Me too. How much have you had to cut from 4.18? Have you managed TV conference in Manchester. He walked on stage, looked at them all... and walked to shave off ten minutes? straight off. I wish I could do that. Stupid speech.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 20 MARCH 2009 04:07:02 GMT
 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2009 23:47:15 GMT
RE: THE LAST TONE RE: DIE, DOCTOR, DIE!

Ha ha, hello! It's like the old days. That was a long day. I'm such an outrageous busker. I went to that microphone, and Nah, we're all just saying 'sod it'. I lost about three pages - yes, it's down from 75 opened my gob. An hour later, they were clapping away like I'd invented television pages to 72. Mind you, I think Planet of the Dead was 73 pages, and it's come in at single-handedly. One day, I'll be caught out. One day, I'll crash and burn. One day, about 58 minutes. It's an imprecise science. To be honest, we're sort of banking on I'll do a Paul Abbott! But so far, the luck is holding. I enjoyed it, actually. I just hid on the fact that the very last episode can be However Long We Want, because it's David's the roof for all the drinks, and mingling, and chat beforehand. I hate a crowd. Oh, I regeneration, on BBC One, so to hell with it! Slightly risky, maybe, because Julie hate it. But when I'm in charge of a crowd, then I love it. This says terrible things about always argues that stuff with BBC One, and now she'll have to argue it from LA, which me, I know! is a weaker position to be in, but I think we should be okay. Too late now. Almost.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 20 MARCH 2009 03:59:51 GMT
 FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 20 MARCH 2009

04:13:15

GMTTHE

LAST

TONE

RE: THE

LAST TONE There we are, gone, done, finito. Final rewrites! (Well, there will be poxy pink pages to Are you going to include the final few pages for the read-through on Wednesday? come, to allow for changes of location and stuff, but in essence... that's it!) And today You can't, can you? David's final line will leak out. Any so-and-so can come to a read-was the last Tone Meeting, too. God, it was long and complicated (there is an e-mail through. Even I'll be there! about the exact chronology and continuity of the Time Lord scenes in the black void,

which I'm not sending you for fear it would bleed your eyes out), but it was a hoot. I

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 20 MARCH 2009 04:23:55 GMT took a) my OBE and b) the Face of Boe action figure. I pinned on the OBE, and every

RE: THE LAST TONE time something got difficult, or we ran out of days or money, I'd hold the OBE with For the read-through, Julie is cutting off the script after Scene 152, as the Doctor goes one hand, while pointing my other hand at the offending person, and claim Power to get his reward. Boo! Although, we wouldn't have got any of those companions toof the Crown over them! Ah, you had to be there. It made me laugh. Best thing was, the read-through, to save money, so fair enough. whenever I nipped out for a cigarette, I'd stand there with my badge still pinned on, so

anyone passing by who wasn't in the meeting must have thought I was a right ponce. Text message from: Ben I looked like a Chelsea Pensioner. Sent: 25-Mar-2009 01:46

And then it was done. Nice round of applause, as normal, but no big speeches.

Just Well, I've made it to Cardiff for the read-through, but they'd messed the way I like it. Outside Upper Boat, there were awkward half-goodbyes off a couple up my booking at the hotel, run out of rooms... so they've put me in of people as we all drifted away, but I just said, 'Shaddup, I'll see you at the wrap party,' a suite! *A WHOLE SUITE TO MYSELF!!! I've two bathrooms and anso* any nonsense was cut short. actual throne.

Mind you, I am tired. This is creeping up on me every single day. Once that engine

has gone, blimey, I'm starting to run down. It's been getting like this for the past six

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

CHA

Text message from:
Russell FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO:
BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 2 APRIL 2009 21:43:29 GMT

Sent: 25-Mar-2008
01:54 RE: APRIL FOOL'S

A suite?! Outrageous! I think they've booked Bernard Cribbins in
the Yes. Yes, soup in a jiffy bag would be lovely. Please send.
other suite. He should arrive by 2am. He
he. I'm okay. It's only a stupid cold, but I'm such a
stupid smoker, the stupid cold gets

stupidly
worse. I hate it, when it's all my own fault. I like having someone to blame.

Text message from: Ben

Sent: 25-Mar-2009
02:03 FROM: RUSSELL T
DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 4 APRIL 2009 14:03:48 GMT

I can hear him in the suite next door. He's playing the Ting Tings at
full RE: APRIL FOOL'S

blast. Thank
you, Noel, that's a wrap. Thank you, Freema, that's a wrap. Mickey Smith and

Martha
Jones have left the building. Scene completed by midday! All done and dusted.

Farewell,
farewell.FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 25
MARCH 2009 16:24:42 GMT

I meant to go on set today, to say hello
and goodbye, but it's not wise to be near actorsTHE LAST READ-
THROUGH with this cold,

so I texted them instead. Noel texted back: 'I'm doing it for you, dude.' IThat was a
privilege. Literally, a privilege. It's the only word. To sit in the same room love
being called dude. So, there we go, another little bit of TV history. Well, until
Theas David Tennant, as he read those final scenes with Bernard in Naismith's
mansion. I *Twelve Doctors in 2013, when everyone is called back. Funny to*
think that Noel washad the best front-row seat ever. All of them, Bernard, John,
everyone - brilliant. But there right at the beginning. Series One, Episode 1. I
remember meeting him in a carespecially David. What an honour. I'll never forget
that. park on the South Bank on that first London shoot,

back in 2004. First thing he said

was,
'I'm coming back next year, yeah?' Good old Noel. And I remember Freema
hidingFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH
2009 16:30:11 GMT

in the
St David's Hotel before her audition with David - locked away with Andy Pryor,RE:
THE LAST READ-
THROUGH on Valentine's
Night 2006! Oh, I sound like I'm getting nostalgic. I'm not. I just felt likeIndeed, job
well done. And for David, job magnificently done. Good times! I'm glad e-
mailing, really.I was there. Really special day. So sad, too. Afterwards, Julie said, 'I
cried so much, I

FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 4 APRIL 2009 17:11:07
GMTthink I've given myself a headache.' And I loved how she stressed the
importance of

secrecy to everyone: 'Do not tell anyone anything. Over the next 48 days of the
shoot, RE: APRIL FOOL'Syou have no friends, you have no
family...!' »I sound like I'm getting
nostalgic. I'm not.«

Yes,
you are. And I think you're allowed to. You must get nostalgic sometimes.
You'reFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL
2009 15:05:31 GMT the man who brought back Doctor Who!APRIL
FOOL'S

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 5 APRIL 2009 14:10:19
GMTed Thomas played a brilliant April Fool this morning. He sent a text saying
that

Michael Jackson wants to visit the TARDIS set at 4.30pm today! Oh, there
were RE: APRIL FOOL'Speople rushing around checking security and
all sorts. I missed it all, because I was Here are the latest ructions. Turns out,
someone in America is about to launch a newasleep -- recovering from a cold. The
cold that you get when you stop work. Yes, that mobile network called Neon.
Yeah, just like the one on the advert on the side of the buscold. Why do I always
get the cold? I'm so bunged up. I haven't been to bed for two in Planet of the
Dead. BBC Editorial Policy terror! It's free advertising! This is absurd, ofdays, just
sleeping in the chair, because when I lie down I can't breathe! course.
It's beyond absurd. We cleared the name way back in November, when no one

had
claimed it; the new Neon has come along since. What are we supposed to do,
clearFROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 2 APRIL 2009

20:08:09 GMT

a name
that would never be used? Like 'Xffrgyxtyl'? Of course, the BBC is now scared
and
terrified. It must be beyond reproach. So we either a) ignore it, please, b) blur
theRE: **APRIL FOOL'S**

Feeling any better? Should I post some hot soup to Cardiff in a jiffy
bag? name on the bus in every shot, or c) since The Mill has a 3D bus
on their computers,

they
could make a 3D patch to superimpose in every bus shot, but that costs money.
Julie is
running with option a), of course, arguing that since Neon is in all the publicity

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shots that have already been released - barely visible, actually, but no one is going to

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2009 18:43:03 GMT

check that - changing the name could create more publicity for Neon than if we left

RE: APRIL FOOL'SIt alone.

D

you know what I've got to do now? Write a Tonight's the Night sketch. It's Johnny

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 7 APRIL 2009 23:17:57
GMT FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 16
APRIL 2009 23:46:32 GMT**RE: APRIL**

Whitfield as Minnie! This block is bonkers.
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 16 APRIL 2009 23:51:48 GMT

RE:

Too late. They've advertised it as a 'script by

Russell T Davies', and they're shooting itRE: **APRIL FOOL'S** on Monday. I have written two lines. I can't bear this. This script is killing me. Would this be the first time that Timothy Dalton and June Whitfield have appeared in the same production?! I love Doctor Who.
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2009 00:44:50 GMT

APRIL FOOL'SFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 9 APRIL 2009 00:45:17 GMT
Here we go. My final Doctor Who script. A masterpiece. MASTERPIECE! I amRE: **APRIL FOOL'S**

bleeding from the fingers. (I'm getting paid for this. It's going straight to charity. I'm Good news! Tracie Simpson and Pete Bennett have got the jobs as the Series Five not touching it.) They really, really want David as the Doctor... but I just couldn't. I producers. Isn't that's brilliant? They really are the best in the land. literally could not type it. Let them moan if they want. I ain't doing it.

Oh, and Claire Bloom is playing the Doctor's mum! (Yes, that's what she's been told,

INT. TARDIS(too.) To think, she was married to Rod Steiger. And now she's in Doctor Who. She told

Tracie that she had no idea how big Doctor Who was until she started telling friends that Tracking round, close on the central console, the hum and she was in it and they were falling over! whirr of power, to find. .

TIL! A blue-faced, hat-wearing, probe-handed alien,FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. SUNDAY 12 APRIL 2009 10:21:23 GMT
operating the controls. Muttering quietly:RE: **APRIL FOOL'S**

Planet of the Dead got 8.4 million viewers last night! That'll do me. (Primeval sank to SAO-TIL

2.7 million. Ouch. They actually don't deserve that.)
Soon, power over Time and Space will be mine...

JACK

it right there, mister!

4 In 1983 Doctor Who Special The Five Doctors, Rassilon was played by the late actor Richard

Matthews. 5 Tonight's the Night competition winner Tim Ingham.

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DOCTOR
TALE
THE FINAL CHAPTER

WHO:

THE WRITER'S
CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE:

Sao-Til looks up -
forces it down on the console, both

Jack grabs Sao-Til's hand,
face-to-face, angry:

And there's CAPTAIN JACK! At the top of the ramp, aiming his
gun, ka-chik!
JACK (CONT'D)

CAPTAIN

One thing he never does, is
carry weapons! So you tell

CAPTAIN JACK (CONT'D)

me, right now, who are
you?!

Who the hell are you, and what are you doing in the
Tardis?
feet away, raises his weapon
gun, both in a stand-off.

Sao-Til breaks free, gets a few
at Jack, and Jack raises his

SAO-TIL

But
mine!

the

Tardis is
SAO-TIL

the planet Aminopia! And with

CAPTAIN JACK
command, I will wreak havoc across the

My name is Sao-Til! From
the Tardis at my

It belongs to the Doctor.

cosmos!

SAO-

TIL

CAPTAIN JACK

I am the Doctor! Look closer, Captain Jack. Old friend. Oh yeah? Doing what?
Don't you recognise me?

SAO-

TIL

CAPTAIN JACK

My species deals in arms
trading.

(lowers gun)

CAPTAIN

JACK

D'you mean... you regenerated?

More weapons!

SAO-

TIL

SAO-TIL

This is my new form.
arms, legs, feet, shoulders,
spine.

No, literally, we trade
hips, and the occasional

CAPTAIN JACK

CAPTAIN

JACK

It's kind of blue. Is that the fashion these days?

Body-snatchers!

SAO-

TIL

SAO-TIL

Blue is the new pink.
Jack has donated quite a few

Legend has it that Captain
organs in his time.

Captain Jack relaxed, crosses over to him.

CAPTAIN

JACK

CAPTAIN JACK

party, one night, on Alpha

Ohh yeah, there was this

Works for me, it's kind of... hot. If you don't mind my

Centauri, with these three

-
saying so. Nice coat. Like the hat.
again)

(serious

you getting hold of this

Never mind that! No way are

SAO-TIL

Sao-Til!

Tardis, I'm gonna stop you,

Thank you.

Both aiming, now - fast, intense

-

CAPTAIN JACK

And
hand?

what's

with

the

SAO-TIL

SAO-TIL

I will paralyse you and

take your brain!

My new weapon. A neural probe, capable of paralysing my
prey.

CAPTAIN

JACK

Get out of here, or I'll shoot!

CAPTAIN JACK

Really?

Well

that's

fascinating.

SAO-TIL

(close, now)

I' ll shoot first!

Cos if I know the Doctor...

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DOCTOR TALE THE FINAL CHAPTER	WHO:	THE CHAPTER	WRITER'S TWENTY-FIVE:
	CAPTAIN		
JACK		DAVID TENNANT	
I'm warning you! John? One more thing.			Okay. See ya. Oh, and
	SAO-		
TIL		CAPTAIN JACK	
I'm warning you!!			Yeah?
	CAPTAIN		
JACK		DAVID TENNANT	
You'll die, Sao-Til!			My Tardis. Mine.
	SAO-TIL		
You will die, Captain Jack!! Die now, and die			
			CAPTAIN
JACK			
<i>forever!!!!</i>			
			Yeah.
The creak of the door -			
			DAVID
TENNANT			
Both turn round -			Say sorry.
And there's	DAVID TENNANT.	In normal clothes.	Popping his
head	CAPTAIN JACK		
round the door.			Sorry.
	DAVID		
TENNANT		DAVID TENNANT	
Hello, John. What are you doing in here? Everyone's gone home.			Good.
			And he goes.
WIDE SHOT, showing the edge of the set, black space beyond,			
cables,	etc.	Captain	Jack
embarrassed.		SAO-TIL	

He's so cool.

CAPTAIN JACK

...I was just, urn... Showing my friend around. This is

CAPTAIN

JACK I

Tim.

love him.

(back

into action)

SAO-TIL

So! Right! Where were we?

I'm gonna stop you, evil Sao-

My name is Sao-Til!

Til, bang bang bang!

CAPTAIN JACK

It's

Tim.

SAO-TIL

DAVID TENNANT

I deflect your bullets

and zap you, bzzzzzzzzzz!

Hello Tim.

CAPTAIN

JACK

SAO-TIL

From the planet Aminopia!
engaging super-bullets, bam bam bam!

I am immortal,

CAPTAIN

JACK

SAO-TIL

Stoke on Trent.
zaaaa!

Zap you right back, ka-

DAVID TENNANT

around the console, like kids, all zap

And they're running

bang argh, etc!

...right, anyway, I'm heading off, d'you want a lift?

both of them loving it.

Pulling out to a wide shot,

CAPTAIN JACK

No, we'll just... tidy up.

END

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2009 00:50:38
GMT

worked so hard, they'd slaved away and refined every scene,
to produce a tight actionRE: **APRIL**

FOOL'S thriller
about Water Monsters on Mars... but that's not what the story is about. That's Well,
it made me chuckle. It shouldn't piss off too many fanboys either. And
now all set dressing. The real story is the Doctor's moral dilemma,
whether to break the Laws

of
Time or not. It all comes down to tiny details and choices. Like, the Doctor says,
've you're free to head off to LA! Good old Sao-Til.

got
to go' -- but they played this with him off-camera, choosing that line to go to a CU
offFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK. FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2009 00:57:34 GMT

Adelaide
instead, so all its impact was lost. The Doctor deciding to leave Bowie Base One

is
huge, but it was being treated as a really ordinary thing. And because the episode
is tooRE: **APRIL FOOL'S**

long
(about 65 minutes), they'd cut the bit where he shakes hands with all the crew
and Christ, LA! Every day, I think of changing my mind. What the hell am I doing?
Maybe

says
goodbye. Again, that's massive. it's my mid-life crisis. I wake up every day
determined to call it off. I do! I'm in a

When
he meets the crew, he sees flashbacks of newspaper headlines showing the
datestrange state of depression about it. It feels gloomy, and mad, and such a
bloody hassle.

of
their deaths, but they'd done this with Adelaide Brooke and Ed Gold only, insteadIt
feels wrong. Did I tell you, I've got a flat already. Venice Beach! Not actually on the

of
everyone, so you didn't get the enormous impact of the story saying: Everyone
Isbeach, but five minutes away. I can't believe it.

Going
To Die.6 As a result, when you got to the end, when the Doctor is fighting time
itself,

you had no idea why everything was so important, why this was so different to
AFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 17 APRIL 2009 14:03:30 GMT

usual
story. This ended disastrously, because Adelaide kills herself, and you just
didn'tRE: **APRIL**

FOOL'S know
why, or what effect that was having on the Doctor. The worst bit was when theI've
been viewing 4.17 rushes. Return to the planet of the Ood! At the Tone
Meeting, Doctor goes to leave the base, and everyone is dying. This had
been edited as the storyI asked for it to be bigger and better than last year's Ood
episode -- which was good, of Adelaide and her crew fighting the good
fight, desperate to survive, intercut withbut so sunny that it looked like a backdrop
of a white sheet. It almost felt like a studio the Doctor walking away... but
that's completely wrong. It's the story of the Doctorat times. Well, blow me, they've
gone and done it. Cliff-faces of ice! Euros is making it turning his back on
dying people, so Adelaide and the crew should become just voiceslook so huge, so
accurate, so beautiful. I'm truly, truly, truly excited. There hasn't been in his
head; he's hearing their screams over the comms, as he keeps walking, until hea
dull or ordinary day's
rushes. decides to break the
fundamental rule of the Time Lords, and go back. It's hard to

Tracie has moved onto prep on Series Five - which I think they're calling Series
One, or describe on paper (and just as hard to sit in the Edit and describe in
pictures), because

Series 11.1, for marketing reasons - so the on-set producer for 4.17/4.18 is
now... Julie! both those things are using the same images, the same events,
the same order. But

She's taken over! It's a reign of terror. She's dusted off her wet-weather gear and
is sitting the emphasis tells a completely different tale. The scenes have a
different reason for

by the monitor. It's just hilarious - and wonderful, because there is no one
better. existing.

But today's 4.16 Edit was
terrible. When I describe it like
this, it comes down to a few little choices (though there were

more
examples), but the sum total of those glitches is a story that doesn't work. A lot of

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 18 APRIL 2009 00:50:38
GMT people wonder what execs do, but days like that are when Julie
and I really prove our

RE: **APRIL**
FOOL'S worth -

because we can come in, with a bit of distance, an overall perspective, and be

Terrible how? Episodes always feel a bit shaky at the first Edit, because you're watching ruthless. And that's where all our hard work pays off, watching the rushes every day,

it to look for the faults. It's a fault-finding mission. I imagine that's why the hardcore because when we say, 'We need a CU of the Doctor on that line,' we know that it exists.

fans suffer such agonies on a first viewing on TV, because they're concentrating, We have a different version of those scenes in our heads, which we know can be edited

unnaturally so, on every creak, every whistle, every one-liner. Impossible viewing. together. I actually loved the process of repairing it, of knowing that it could make sense

Those sorts of fans, sadly, never move on from that first viewing. I wonder if a lot of in the end. And I'm describing it really simply here, like 'We are right, and they were

them ever see it properly. wrong,' but it's much more interesting than that, to sit with Nikki, Graeme, and Will,

discussing

what this story is, and how to make it work. It's not easy. It can be awkward

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SATURDAY 18 APRIL 2009 15:35:07 GMT - it's not nice, to sit facing lovely, clever, hardworking people, and tell them that they've

RE: APRIL FOOL'S

You're right, it's always unsettling at the first Edit of an episode, because it's my job to 6 In Doctor Who 4.16. Ed Gold (played by Peter O'Brien) is the Deputy Captain of Bowie Base One.

find problems. Today's was fascinating. Graeme Harper and the editor, Will Oswald, had

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**DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE**
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

gone adrift -- but it's natural. It happens. Everyone gets too close to this stuff, but a good, honest team can get the whole train back on the tracks again.
15:01 Text message from: Russell
Sent: 29-Apr-2009

It's been re-edited twice now, and we're almost there. Almost. Another session on I'm in THE WRONG COUNTRY!!! Bollocks. It is sunny and lovely here, but Monday. And I've brought a copy home for this weekend. I've already watched it there is nothing to compare to Russell Tovey and a Judoon. twice, so I've a good insight into the final little tweaks needed to make it sing. Slowly,

message from: Ben but surely. Even before we've finished, I think it's wonderful. David is so sensational Sent: 29-Apr-2009 15:05 when he walks back and tries to save Bowie Base One. He's savage and brilliant. I'm so

Bennett suggested that the Judoon should be arm wrestling: It's lucky to be working with him. It's his birthday today! He celebrated it in the Ice Cave

fantasy. I might do it anyway later. Of the Ood, filming until 5am -- shot at Wookey Hole, where Revenge of the Cybermen

was filmed. That's where Lis Sladen almost died falling off a boat or something.7 Text message from: Ben

29-Apr-2009 18:48 FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 26 APRIL 2009 08:01:10 GMT

a wrap on Johnny B! He and David are hugging. David: 'Well **RE: APRIL FOOL'S**

mate. That has GOT to be our last scene together. I'm off on holiday. Well, off to London this afternoon for the BAFTAs, and then from

there to Spain. So, I'll be off e-mail for a week, but still on my mobile.
MONDAY 11 MAY 2009 11:16:21 GMT FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK,

But before I go... listen, there are moves afoot to really close off the shooting of **REGENERATION EV** the regeneration on 12 May, just because people will besiege poor Matt. But Julie is I'm back in Manchester. I came up on Saturday morning. It's all part of my plan to fighting the good fight, and sending e-mails saying that you must be there to represent spend

more time with Andrew before disappearing to another country. Guilt trip!
But *DWM*, so we should prevail. Although, when it comes to the Matt Smith
stuff, you're

I'm heading back to Cardiff late this
afternoon. I'm going to have dinner with my oldin Piers' hands. I was planning to
be there myself, as a dyed-in-the-wool fanboy,
but mate Tony Wood tonight. He produced those
old Granada soaps that I worked on, I'm beginning to realise that I might have to
duck out, just to give poor Matt room to and The
Grand, but I'm around tomorrow, so I'll head on set, I think. Regeneration breathe.
(He'd only fall in love with me anyway. It happens.) Hasta la vista,
etc. Day! I'm still a bit wary - it might get

embarrassing, with 5,000 people on set to see

P.S. Did you know, we're getting a Doctor Who Christmas BBC One idem?!
Like the new boy -- but we'll see. Wallace and
Gromit did last year. David sitting on the TARDIS as it's pulled by

reindeer!
message from: Ben

11-May-2009 17:02

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 26 APRIL 2009 08:17:11 GMT

in the Gate Room, Bernard is knocking on the booth door.:-)

RE: APRIL FOOL'S

In one idem, all the reindeer should have the Master's face! Ha
ha.

Text message from: Russell

Have a relaxing
trip.
11-May-2009 17:10

him knock three times. That'll throw 'em.

Text message from: Ben

Sent:

29-Apr-2009

14:58

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, MONDAY 11 MAY 2009 23:41:14 GMT

FROM:

I'm in Cardiff's Tiger Tiger with two Hath, two Slitheen, a Sycorax,
a

RE: REGENERATION EVE

Judoon, and the Graske, amongst others. Neill Gorton: 'We need
to How was dinner with Tony Wood? I'm
sat up in my hotel room, wondering how Matt

give David a good send-off, don't we? A proper alien bar!
John Smith must be feeling tonight.

Barrowman is here, too, flirting with Russell Tovey. And Euros Lyn. Oh,

and the fire alarm has just gone off! How's Spain?

7 During filming of 1975 Doctor Who serial Revenge of the Cybermen in Wookey Hole, a boat carrying Elisabeth Sladen went

wild, forcing her to jump into the water.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 12 MAY 2009 00:01:11 GMT

FROM:

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 12 MAY 2009 15:13 **RE: REGENERATION**

EVE

LORD DAVIES

AND LADY GARDNER I'm sat up in my flat, wondering how David Tennant must be feeling tonight. I'm on the iPhone, on set! (Where's Matt Smith?!) Everyone's standing around

I'm kind of worried that lots of people are excited by how NEW, NEW, NEW it is scratching their heads over how to blow up the TARDIS control room. Hey, and tomorrow, without considering David's feelings enough. They're all assuming he's fine. you've just come over and asked me what's happening. I said, 'Nothing. Very slowly.' But I don't know. I think it will be a very strange day for him. But you know that. (Most pointless e-mail ever!) Oh, and then you asked me to e-mail

Have you seen the call sheet? It just calls Matt 'The New Man'. The third Doctor I've you those photos that I took on my phone over lunch, of you and Julie trying on Timeseen arrive! If you'd told me that a few years ago... Lord collars. Here they are.

»How was dinner with Tony Wood?«

Dinner was lovely, thanks. I haven't seen Tony properly for years, maybe ten or so.

I used to get so drunk with him. We'd arrive in a bar, and order a bottle of wine each.

The same wine. Just, each. Now that we're old, greying and widening, we both had

orange juice all night. He's the one who first introduced me to Julie, all those years

ago. He'd been saying for ages, 'You must work with this woman. You'll love her.' And

here we are today. Best of all, he was full of good wishes and excitement for LA. I'm

so paranoid, I tend to assume that most people must think it's a stupid idea, so it was

lovely to hear someone saying it was wonderful. That did me good.

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 12 MAY 2009 00:16:18 GMT

RE: REGENERATION EVE

I've got a call sheet. It's insane, isn't it? Just when you think it can't get any madder,

what with both 'David Tennant' and 'The New Man', it lists 'Timothy Dalton as coming in for a costume fitting for Time Lord President! This call sheet is definitely a keeper.

I've been thinking about David, too. Really, I have. Have you seen today's rushes?

He is, literally, amazing. I was on set for the last few hours this afternoon, and Julie

played me back some of what I'd missed earlier in the day - the bit where the Doctor

gets angry at Wilf, stuck in the booth - and it's magnificent, and heartbreaking, and

really just mind-blowingly good. He's going out on a high. Later on, he and Bernard

were having a laugh on the TARDIS set. I hadn't realised, but it was Bernard's first

time on the TARDIS. Bernard (on the working Time Rotor): 'It sounds just like an Australian magpie.' David: 'Oh, is that what it sounds like?' Bernard: 'Yeah. A sort of

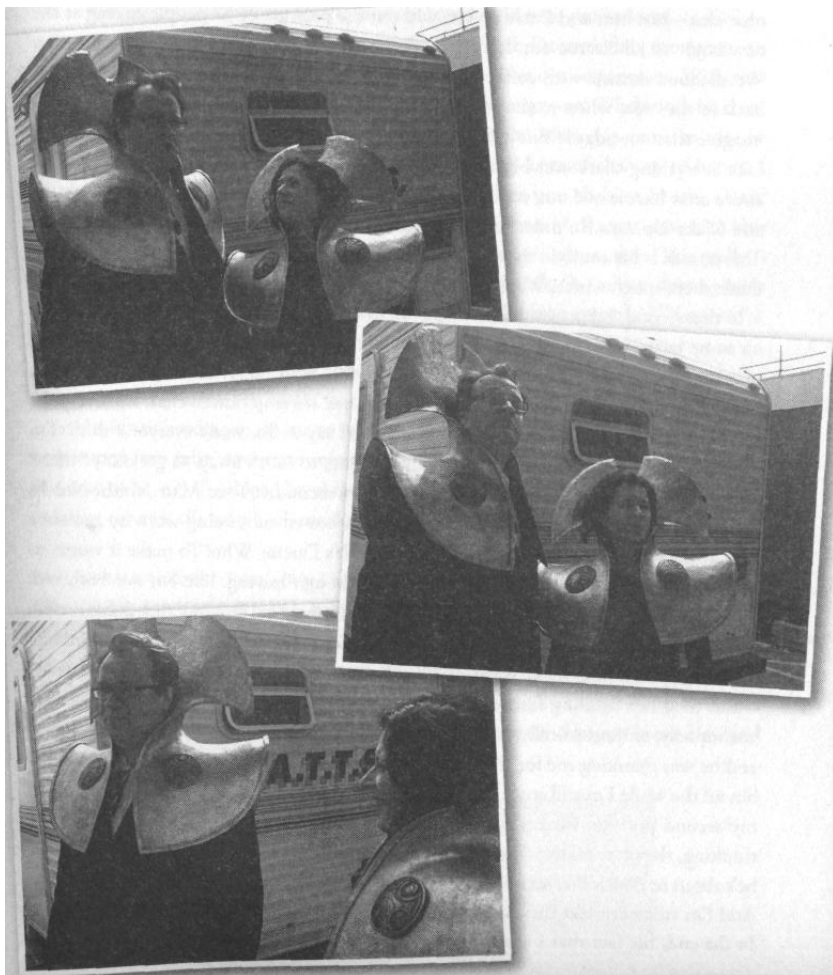
yodel. Lovely.' Then Julian Howarth waded in: 'We've had three years of that, Bernard.

Three years of us asking the Art Department whether they can fix it, and three years of

them saying, yes, they can. Well, they can't.' Bernard: 'Well, I like it.'

And even in his final few days as the Doctor, David is still breaking bits of the console. Euros: 'You okay there, David?' David: 'Um... I might have just broken it.'

The more things change...



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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER			

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, TUESDAY 12 MAY 2009 18:13

so
 horrific, I practically pushed him away. 'Don't talk to me! Go to the studio!' And off**RE:**
LORD DAVIES AND LADY
GARDNER he went, to become
 the Doctor, in a Cardiff shed. Ha ha ha, those photos! I've got the part, oh yes. I'm actually
 convinced. Sometimes, you see people meeting David, and they go to
 pieces in front of him, all

I can't believe I met Matt Smith today. At last! You're right, he's lovely. Even
 more nerves, and bluster, and rambling -- and I just did the same to the next Doctor!
 Still, handsome in real life, I think -- but then so am I. It was all suitably bonkers. I'd
 been he'd better get used to it. wondering where and when that meeting would ever
 happen, and it turned out to be

FROM:
 BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, TUESDAY 12 MAY 2009 18:26 in the middle of a typical Doctor
 Who-style calamity. An Upper Boat blunder! Having

decided that the studio should be emptied for the rehearsal of Man's first scene
 (really **RE: LORD DAVIES AND LADY GARDNER** nice idea -- just him and Euros on
 set, without the pressure of 57 people staring at the Yes, I spotted you pirouetting on
 the tarmac! You should turn professional. new boy), we all cleared out, left the TARDIS
 empty, ready for the Eleventh Doctor. It was a strange day, wasn't it? David
 filming the Tenth Doctor's final moments, his We all stood outside with coffee and cigarettes.
 It was like when I first started in TV heartbreaking last words, and then throwing
 back his head to regenerate. With that back in the '80s, when studios actually used to stop for
 official tea breaks. Can you in the can -- did you hear him? -- he said, 'Bring in the
 next one! When does he start? imagine that nowadays?! But as I stood there, it occurred to
 me... this is going wrong. Where is he?' And on came Matt Smith, fresh out of the
 Make-Up van. I'm sure he Like everything that's ever been over-planned, it's going to go very,
 very wrong. The was pirouetting. (Where could he have got that from?) Lots of
 shaking of hands. Ientire crew has cleared out, onto the tarmac, but Matt Smith has been in
 the Costume think that's what I'll remember most about today. Everyone shaking
 hands. David and Make-Up vans. In order to get to the TARDIS, he has to walk through all of
 us! and Euros. You and Steven. Matt and everybody. Steven said, 'I can't deal
 with this This tarmac is his route to the studio! Oh my God! This hasn't made things better;
 it's much momentousness.' Even James Bo- I mean, Timothy Dalton said, 'This really
 is made them much worse. We're all lined up like his baptism of
 fire. a handing-over-of-the-baton day.' (How funny was Double-O-
 Dalton, flirting with

In that second, I thought, I have to get out of here, because I can't just bump into
 him Julie outside the Make-Up truck? 'Can I just say, you're looking gorgeous?' 'Stop it!
 I'm

on some tarmac. For starters, what would I do? Go up and introduce myself? On the blushing!' At this rate, she'll be the next Bond girl!)

tarmac? I didn't want to interrupt him, not with his head full of his very first dialogue. And Mart's first words as he stepped up onto the TARDIS set - 'Hello, everybody.

It's such an important moment. Hardly time for me! If I stop him to chat, will everyone Lovely to meet you all. I'm Matt.' Nice. Sweet. Charming.

else? The scene will never get shot. But if I don't say hello, won't everyone think I'm As David was heading to the car, to be driven home, having changed out of his costume,

rude? I swear, I was turning to go, literally, turning, to hurry away, to get out of there, he bumped into Julie, Andy and me outside. Julie: 'Who are you again?' Andy: 'Didn't

and -- slow-motion -- as I'm turning, in that very second... I see Matt Smith. No! To you used to be... ?' Good job David laughed. 'Some other bloke's in there,' he protested,

be honest, I see David's suit. The Tenth Doctor's brown suit, being worn by someone pointing towards the studio, all mock indignation. 'What the P**'s going on?'

else. That's weird - oh! It's him! It's Matt Smith! It's Doctor Who! To make it worse, as

I see him, he sees me. I'm half-turned away, as though leaving, like I'm not bothered. FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 15 MAY 2009 19:09:39 GMT

Simultaneously, yes, he might well be looking at me, but I'm thinking, that doesn't mean **RE: LORD DAVIES AND LADY GARDNER**

he knows who I am. He only knows Steven and Piers, not me. Maybe he's just thinking, We went out last night -- me, David, Julie, Phil -- for a meal, a private little farewell. In

who's that pirouetting man? What do I do? Keep turning? Turn back? Faint?! Claridge's restaurant! I've never had such a posh meal. It was like those ones you see on

But then he's heading for me, and yes, bless him, he knows who I am - and we're TV, with taster menus and things. But I'd have been happy in Burger King, with that

both madly, enthusiastically, ridiculously polite. I'd sent him a card when he got cast, company. It was a beautiful evening -- lots of funny stories and happy memories, and

and he was thanking me for that, and I was saying, 'Oh, no, no, no, don't be so daft,' the feeling of a job well done.

but all the while I'm still stuck with one leg half-turned-away, as though I'm practising

my second position for ballet class. I'm a study in desperate nonchalance. And I'm

Text message from: Ben

thinking, the poor man, 57 people on the tarmac have noticed us and are staring, and

Sent: 15-May-2009 19:18

he's about to do his first scene, so the last thing he wants to do is listen to me babbling.

You still in London? Are you coming on set tonight, to see Billie and

And I'm still staring at the suit. All I'm really thinking is, you're wearing David's suit!

Camille on the Brandon Estate for one last time?

In the end, the fact that I was delaying him and interrupting his train of thought was

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2009 21:26:00 GMT
everything. It was actually creepy.**MISSIVE FROM A CARDIFF HOTEL ROOM**

Russell, I don't even know if this e-mail will reach you. I'm on the wireless internet
FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 28 MAY 2009 20:04:12 GMT

back in my hotel room (no suite this time!), but the signal keeps dropping out, so
RE: BACK IN MANCHESTERheaven knows if you'll ever get to read this... I've delayed my flight by a week -- I'm now going on 22 June -- or my furniture won't

Anyway. So. Wow. That was David's final day filming Doctor Who. Wasn't it sad? His have arrived! I'd be sleeping on the floor. I'm too old to sleep on the floor, though it last scene, at Upper Boat, dangling on wires against green screen. I'm like an uncool would be a funny way to arrive in a new country. Spider-Man! And then it was over. 'Am I free? Can I walk away?' he asked Euros, and I forgot to tell you, the Eleventh Doctor's companion is revealed tomorrow! Keep then he disappeared, without fuss or fanfare. I was thinking, really? 'Is that it? Then I heard your eye on the usual news outlets around midday. Pete Bennett say, 'Let's make him think we're just calling him back for a green-screen In other news, I just channel-hopped and caught The Sound of Drums. Am I on reference.' As if he'd believe that! But back in walks David. Pete: 'Ladies and gentlemen, drugs when I write these things? you'll be very sorry to hear that's a golden wrap on David Tennant, the Tenth Doctor.'

He's showered with confetti, the biggest round of applause, champagne, lots of people
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 28 MAY 2009 21:41:16 GMTcrying... even David was fighting back the tears, wasn't he? His little speech was bang on. **RE: BACK IN MANCHESTER**I'm very proud of everything we've done, and thank you all very, very much.' And then, On drugs? The Sound of Drums! Whatever could you mean? I've changed my mind! I'm going to do Series Five after all! Is it too late?' Sniff". PS. The new companion? I think I've exhausted the Jimmy Krankie jokes, so I'll

So long, David. You've been beyond brilliant. shut up.

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, MONDAY 25 MAY 2009 16:30:43 GMT
FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 29 MAY 2009 12:09:46 GMT

BACK IN MANCHESTER
RE: BACK IN MANCHESTERMoving country is a nightmare. I'm staring at this house, wondering what to pack, From the BBC Press Release announcing Karen Gillan's casting as Matt Smith's

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE

TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

companion: 'With filming due to begin this summer, Gillan beat off dozens of hopefuls UNIT from a secret society to a massive, expensive, sci-fi organisation, 'protecting the to land one of television's most coveted roles.' Now, who was responsible for that? Did skies of planet Earth! That's practically a whole new show. Conceptually, the Valiant is she? Really?! 'Beat off dozen of hopefuls'? Ha ha ha, me so smutty. But whoever wrote a huge leap for the show. Have I seeded it in? Built up to it? Given any sort of notion it should be promoted. this is the world in which UNIT now exists? No, I just throw it in as brand new.

then I don't dwell on it. I move on. Actually, the next thing you discover is that FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 2009 13:36:52 GMT the Master helped to design the Valiant, which is massive -- that's what allows there: **BACK IN MANCHESTER**

Paradox Machine to be in place, and the whole plot revolves around that I've been hither and yon these past few days -- the Manchester/London/Cardiff triangle. -- but it's thrown away. It almost sounds like a gag, to make his wife laugh. Cardiff for some Sarah Jane Edits and a final Torchwood Dub (it's kind of embarrassing What I'm saying is, I can see how annoying that looks. I can see how maddening it walking back into the Cardiff offices after that big exit), then London for The Mill, must be, for some people. Especially if you're imposing really classical script structures, and now back to Manchester.

templates, and expectations on that episode, even unconsciously. I must look

But I meant to answer that question about The Sound of Drums, because sometimes, like a vandal, a kid, or an amateur. No wonder some people hate what I write. Of I swear, I can sit and watch things like a viewer, like it's all happening as new right course, I'm going to win this argument. (Did you guess?) Because the simple fact is: in front of me. I can watch my stuff and get this disconcerting draught of... well, of all those things were planned. All of them were my choice. They're not lazy, clumsy, how it must look to other people, sometimes. Of how unplanned it all seems. Like I'm or desperate. They're chosen. I can see more traditional ways of telling those stories, making it up as I go along. I'm refusing, on

screen, to do all those normal things that but I'm not interested. I think the stuff that you gain from writing in this way -- the would make an episode more coherent, with a beginning-middle-and-end wholeness. shock, the whirlwind, the freedom, the exhilaration -- is worth the world. I've got this! It really struck me when the Doctor discovers the Archangel Network. That comes sort of tumbling, freewheeling style that somersaults along, with everything happening completely out of the blue. I mean, completely! It could have been foreshadowed *now - not later, not before, but now, now, now. I've made a Doctor Who that exists*- Saxon could have been talking to the Cabinet about his satellites, for example. More in the present tense. And I think that's exactly like the experience of watching Doctor significantly, with the entire world hypnotised, it's interesting how little the Doctor *Who. It's happening now, right in front of your eyes! If you don't like it, if you don't* even asks, 'How is the Master doing this?' Technically, that's a major plot strand, join in with it, then... blimey, these episodes must be nonsensical. But those classical but I'm more interested in running on, to find new things. You're left with a Hugely structures can be seen in Primeval, in Demons, in Merlin, in all of them -- and yet we! Important Network that is only discovered... in the exact moment that it's revealed to stand with millions more viewers. And I think that's partly why. So, ha! be Hugely Important! No warning, no ground-laying, nothing. Then, to make it even

BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES. WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 2009 22:30:15 GMT odder, it's dispensed with in the same scene. And I'm being casual with a plot element

that, next episode, saves the entire world. That's bordering on reckless!

RE: BACK IN MANCHESTER

It's the same with the discovery of the TARDIS on board the Valiant? The Doctor Does watching back your old episodes (okay, the Series Three finale is hardly 'old', opens a door... and there it is! But actually, look back, when did the Doctor last worry but you know what I mean) affect how you write your next script, even in small ways? about where the TARDIS is? I'm not sure he's even mentioned it at all. And neither You often talk of learning from your successes, but do you learn from your mistakes? has the Master. And then we discover that the Master has turned it into a Paradox If ever you get a chance to catch a repeat or watch the DVD of Series One, Machine... well, we had no sign of that, did we? 9 Where were the traditional scenes

of Episode 1, Rose, and send me a critique of that, I'd be absolutely fascinated to know the Master plotting with Lucy, or with the Toclafane? 'Soon my Paradox Machine will what you make of it. Because -- and I watched it back the other day -- that episode is complete,' etc. I don't use any of the available opportunities to explain anything, or just about the perfect first episode. I don't mean it's beyond fault (it isn't), or that it's to make the structure clear, or to reassure people that there's a plan at work here. your best episode ever (it isn't - although it's up there, maybe), but it's exactly what was

The Valiant is another good example. That's not just the reveal of a ship; it's the needed back then, every beat of it, the most finely tuned opening episode that a reboot reveal of a different world order in Doctor Who. In one, big picture, I'm transforming of the show could have wished for. Not a scene is wasted. Not a line. The tone is spot

and so self-assured. I'm not just saying that to be nice. It's what I think. And that's In Doctor Who 3.12/3.13, the Master captures UNIT'S airborne aircraft carrier, the Valiant

⁹ The Doctor's TARDIS has been 'cannibalised' by the Master to create a Paradox Machine, which prevents the universe from

I'd love you to watch it back, and tell me what you think. collapsing under the inherent logical contradiction of a grandfather paradox when the Toclafane kill their ancestors - modern-day humans.

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE

TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 5 JUNE 2009 01:31:12 GMT

RE: **BACK** **IN**
MANCHESTER first, no
cash involved. But that sort of makes it worse. That means that someone didn't I'm
off to Swansea for four days - to say goodbye to the family! - so e-mail will
be do it for money; they did it simply to spoil. They had a secret, and they
wanted to spoil intermittent. Normal service will be resumed next week. But, yes,
I'll try to sit down it, and did so. What is your life lacking, to think like that?
and watch Rose. Good
idea! I'm back in Cardiff
Bay, for the last time. (Well, until I come back for the Dub

in
October.) I watched 4.17 again today. It's very, very wonderful, I think. Do
youFROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, THURSDAY 11 JUNE 2009 16:27:11
GMT remember when I was worried about bringing back the Master,
and thought I
didn't**HELLO** have

a story? Ha! It's reeking of story. The Doctor and the Master are story generators. I
booked my plane ticket to LA yesterday. It's very strange booking something for
22 I can't imagine ending the series any other way now. It feels massive,
and it feels June that says 'Return: 23 October' (That's when we come back for the
Waters of Mars intimate, both at the same time. And when Timothy Dalton
appears, halfway through Dub.) That just looks so huge, on paper.
OCTOBER!!! the episode... oh my God!!! So,
good times. And then I went out to Pizza Express in

For now, I'm back in Cardiff. I'm off to the first viewing of 4.17 - with Julie
attending the Bay, which has employed the Most Handsome Waiter Ever. Now!
After four years, via iChat from LA, which should be
hilarious. now they employ him! Bastards.

Hey
ho. Onwards. Just time to pack up this flat, lock things away, grab what I
need, FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2009 13:35:32
GMT and then I'm off. Ah, I've had good times in this flat. I wrote
great stuff sitting in this **GOODBYE,**
MANCHESTER chair.

I've loved it here. This fantastic view. The water and the sky. I think I'll miss It's like
I've got forces of nature trying to stop me leaving this house in
Manchester. Coffee Mania more than anything. I wondered whether to pop in
and say goodbye to First of all, half the electricity went. My kitchen is dead. I've got

a kettle in the living the Coffee Mania staff this morning... and then decided they might think I'm weird, room, like a student. I'm sitting in a death trap, for all I know. I keep waiting for so I didn't. Now I wish I had. And so it goes. something to ignite. Then my PC blew up. Literally, everything wiped. Everything! But I've got 'WATCH ROSE' branded on my head. I haven't forgotten. I really will! All those years of work! Thank God I've just got a new Mac laptop - talk about good get that done, on Sunday, before I leave for LA. If it's the last thing I do! Which it timing. It's now the centre of my world. (But for Christ's sake, where's the delete key? might well be. Ben, where is it? No, not the backspace one. The normal, proper delete key. IT'S

DRIVING ME MAD!!!) The stress levels with this move! You could run the national FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, FRIDAY 19 JUNE 2009 01:02:03 GMT grid off my forehead. RE: GOODBYE, MANCHESTER

But did you see, someone has taken a still from the wrap party DVD, and sent it Thanks, Russell. In the meantime, try not to go mad with all the packing. to a website? And now it's in The Sun - a photo of David, John Simm, and Timothy

Dalton, with Timothy in his full Seal-of-Rassilon garb, just in case you were in any FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 21 JUNE 2009 23:12:27 GMT doubt about who he's playing! Which bastard leaked that? Good old fandom. They ROSE always find new ways to let you down. This is probably the last e-mail that I'll ever send you from Cardiff Bay, so you'll be

pleased to hear that I've just watched Rose. The last piece of telly I watch in this flat FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2009 14:15:37 GMT before leaving for LA is Doctor Who, Series One, Episode 1. Where it all began. How RE: GOODBYE, MANCHESTER appropriate. All right, there's no delete button. But there are no viruses that eat up your hard drive, And I loved it. so swings and roundabouts. Did you want more?! Sometimes I think every fan in the world wants me to say,

I saw the thing in The Sun. Who would do that? What is the point of leaking stuff Actually, we got that very wrong. I'm so sorry.' They will wait a long time. A long, like that? I really thought you'd be able to keep the Time Lord thing a secret. long time. Of course, these episodes will age, though that's a lovely process, and there

are always things that I'd have done differently, because there are always ways to do

FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, FRIDAY 19 JUNE 2009 00:35:56

GMT something differently. But that, frankly, was a joy - sitting
down to watch a first-classRE: **GOODBYE,**
MANCHESTER episode of
high-octane, big-success, primetime drama from the year 2005. Beautiful. The sad
thing about that leak is, it wasn't for the money, because it was sent to a
website If anything, I'm amazed that we worried, that we were scared that the
show would die

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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TALE

TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

a death. Look at it! How could you not watch Doctor Who when it's that good?! show at work 49 years later. Rose is the same. It's a powerful template, still at work

I hope you're not expecting modesty here. This is too important. today. Just look, for example, at how open and visible the plots are in this fictional

Okay, little niggles did leap out, though they annoyed me at the time. The climax world, right from the start. When the Doctor blows up Henrik's, the explosion is could do with a tighten, of course, but we were under-running. Rose's bedroom is reported on TV - and being commented on by Jackie, while her daughter was actually horribly pink, but we fixed that in later episodes. I wish we'd cut Mickey's improvised a witness. That's immediately, significantly, a new form of Doctor Who, because it's dance in Trafalgar Square at the beginning, and I'm bemused to think how reticent saying: this is public now. No more secret invasions of the Home Counties. The whole I must have been back then, in the Edit, not to have demanded its excision. Plus, world is in danger, and everyone is going to know it. That persisted, to become a spine we're in Trafalgar Square, and you can't see Nelson's Column! (Well, except in one of the entire series. Four years before the human race flies right across the universe establishing shot, without Mickey and Rose.) How mad is that? I was there on location in The Stolen Earth, there it is, in miniature. The agenda, laid out for all to see. You'd that day, too. Nowadays, I'd just march up to the camera and turn it round. Oh, I've think that was first signalled by the destruction of Big Ben in Aliens of London, but become a monster. And the tiniest, daftest niggles of all - the Henrik's security guard actually the essence of it is right here, right now, about six minutes into Rose. hands Rose the lottery money in a see-through plastic bag. I don't believe you'd ever do The sexuality is there, too. Straight away, the simple, natural inclusion of sexuality. Rose that. I'm sure the script said 'envelope'. It's simply not the sort of bag that you'd collect kisses Mickey. Jackie flirts with the Doctor. The whole thing ends with Rose choosing a lottery money in. After that, we learnt to discuss every tiny prop in the Tone Meetings. new man. Plus, the word 'gay' appears for the first time in Doctor Who, Oh, and look at And then, look, Chris whirrs the sonic against a lock -- and there's a visible ripple! We Mickey saying to Rose, 'Don't read my e-mails!' (Some people think that Rose treated never did that in future episodes, because it would have eaten up our FX budget. That's Mickey badly, like she was the selfish one, but will you look at that line?! What on Earth not a niggles, though. That's rather sweet. I like it. do you think that line means? Seriously? That boy deserved to lose his girlfriend, right

The strangest thing about watching it now is remembering the stuff I'd get hung up from the start!) The whole thing exists in a world where sex exists, which isn't always the

on at the time, because writing this sort of thing was still new to me. For

example, case with science fiction. Sex and selfishness. There is a real, vivid, selfish streak running

I remember worrying for months - months! - about Jackie's coffee table. Yes, Jackie's through these characters, and that's very me. I love writing that into characters. Too

coffee table. Because Jackie's coffee table is smashed into smithereens when the Doctor many TV characters are just 'nice'. Make them selfish - naturally selfish, as we all are

and Rose are tussling with an Auton arm in her living room, and yet - here's the killer - and they sing. That leapt out at me, watching Rose again. Long before his mysterious

- it's never mentioned again! Now, be honest, that's never worried you, has it? But that e-mails, Mickey abandons Rose for the football down the pub. The next morning, Jackie

was months of worry for me. It really bothered me. I kept coming back to it - because delivers that killer line, 'There's no point in getting up.' That strand continues all the way

in 99 per cent of dramas, that would have repercussions. Well, not hugely, okay, but through to Donna, who has to return to her small-town Pringles and Heat-magazine life,

it would at least get mentioned. If a woman like Jackie stepped out of her bedroom or the Sylvia who always said that Donna was no good at school -- or Martha Jones, the

to find her coffee table in pieces, she would never stop banging on about it. I worried only one who's ever truly selfless... and suffers for it! All of that is built into the very first

and worried. I went through all sorts of options (when Jackie is late-night-shopping script. A stifling world, demanding a Doctor to rescue you.

later on, should she say that she's after a new coffee table? No, really?!), before I learnt And the comedy is there. It took me four years to build up the confidence to do a

to simply let go. That's when I realised that in fantasy/action-adventure stuff, certain complete comedy episode, with The Unicorn and the Wasp, but it's rattling out in Rose,

things fly past and are best forgotten, because the action, the characters, the audience and that's quite brave, I think. As I've said before, tragedy is straightforward, but it

and the writer don't want it to stop, or to obsess over details. Move on! Leave the takes far more nerve to be funny. I laughed out loud at Jackie's Arianna line. Neat

wreckage behind you! And I never stopped doing

that. bit of writing, that. It dodges the expected template, because that's an old joke, which

Most of all, it hit me, watching Rose, that this show is exactly what I wanted it to be would normally go like this...

- and it is, in its first 45 minutes, exactly what it is now. It has never fundamentally changed. There has been no mission creep since 2005, no timidity, no reversals. There JACKIE

got two thousand quid off the council, just cos

has been development and exploration, but no wandering. I'm proud of that. It's hard the old man behind the desk said she looked Greek.

to keep a show as it is without letting external pressures, or simply the passing of time, bend it out of shape. I've always admired the very first episode of Coronation Street, ROSE

she is Greek.

because it sets out what the show is with absolute precision. You can see the exact same

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

JACKIE

gets
his head pulled off!10 I'd actually forgotten that. His. Head. Pulled. Off. Wow!

I know, but that's not the
point. Clive gets shot in the face in front of his
wife and child. Blimey. And the Doctor is as

hard
as nails - we're nothing but apes, and Mickey's death isn't given a second thought.Except,
Rose's line has been cut, leaving Jackie to leap straight to the punchline And Rose's
ditching of Mickey at the end - with a smile! - becomes the ultimateunaided - 'I know she is
Greek, but that's not the point' - so the joke is earlier than commitment to the Doctor's
life.you'd expect. Which is good! And it makes Jackie madder, too, because she's
practically Look how much of this show is defined by Mickey Smith. I'd never
noticed thattalking to herself- a great character synopsis for her at the same time. Mmm, not
bad. before. Rose is meant to be the everyman, the companion, the touchstone by
whichNice. we
measure everything - but the whole episode uses Mickey as an equal and opposite

Immediately, the Doctor is the Doctor, too. Right from the start. There's the
Time insight. I don't remember doing that deliberately. But it works.War, straight
away. ('I couldn't save any of them!' he yells, and it takes until 4.18 to And do you
know what is staggering? What really amazed me, watching Rose again?find out why.) He's
got that whole mythic side to him already. Dumbos think that Chris and Billie.
Oh. My. God. And they wonder why certain other shows don't work!!I'm turning the Doctor
into God, when clearly I'm saying that God doesn't exist, that Christ, we were lucky.
Well, lucky and clever. Those two are simply amazing together.

They
bristle on screen. They're sparking. Sizzling. I could watch those two forever. Iwe mythologise
real people, events or aspirations into deities, and pay the price for it.

just
found that dazzling, Ben. That's the definition of star power right there, in thoseAll of that is
circling around the Doctor from the off, with his 'the turn of the Earth'

two
actors.speech.

So!
I'm surprised by all of that, to be honest. I'm amazed to see that so much of

THE
DOCTOR what I wanted from Doctor Who was so
present and so clear, from the opening titles

D'you know like we were saying? About the Earth

onwards.

I thought I'd watch something more timid, more unformed, more embryonic.

revolving?

(pause)

didn't remember it being that confident, that certain, right from the start. We've got

It's like when you're a kid, the first time they tell you
used to doing interviews in which we talk about the horrors of production, being
that the world's turning. And you just can't quite
believe thrown in at the deep end, the amount that we had to learn,
and the steepness of

it, cos everything looks like it's standing still.

(right at her)

learning curve, etc, that we've forgotten: this was good. This was great! Actually,

I can feel it.
BRILLIANT! And the episode asserts itself again and again, even today, because

45 minutes established an audience that grew, for jive years. That's important,

He holds her hand. The two of them, joined together; a gradual

rare. This show has drawn more and more people to it as time has gone on, and
tilt to the image, the feeling of suppressed power.

hasn't increased its audience by changing; it's done so by staying the same, by being

THE

DOCTOR

(CONT'D) consistent, by never flinching. We've had
some nerve. That sort of success doesn't

The turn of the Earth. The ground beneath our feet
is happen often. In fact, it happens just about never.

spinning at a thousand miles an hour, and therefore

it happened to Doctor Who.

But

planet is' hurtling round the sun at sixty-seven thousand
miles an hour, and I can feel it. We're falling
through Ha!

space, you and me, clinging to the skin of this tiny
Right. That's it. I'm off tomorrow. Bye, then. Look after TV for me. Don't let
anyone

little world, and if we let go -

it while I'm gone.

He lets go. Back to normal. Rose shaken, steps back.

THE DOCTOR (CONT'D)

That's who I am. Now forget me, Rose Tyler. Go home.

I think the saltiness of the episode leapt out. There's a real vim and vigour about it. An edge. It's hard, at times. It's a tough world. Why does that surprise me? Maybe, with the passing of time, I've come to regard Rose as a safe opener - a thought that evolves into 'soft opener', like maybe I took some easy options. Did I hell! Look at it! Mickey

Doctor Who 1.1, the Doctor pulls the head off an Auton replica of Mickey.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

THREE

DAYS
DAYS

LATER...

Text message from:
Ben FROM:
BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SUNDAY 5 JULY 2009 22:13:40 GMT

Sent: 24-Jun-2009
10:59 HELLO
AGAIN

Since you left two days ago, Primeval has been axed, Irish
TV How's LA? Have you taken up
rollerblading yet? Entered rehab? No? Married Jodie

broadcaster Setanta has fallen into administration, ITV are having to re-
Foster? (Or is it Darryl Strawberry?) Come on,
Russell, you must have gone native!

shoot the first wave of X Factor auditions (yes, really! I know!), and

there's naff all on TV tonight.¹ You know when you told me to look
after FROM: RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN
COOK, SUNDAY 5 JULY 2009 23:39:49 GMT

TV for you...? There will be NO TV LEFT by the time you come back
to RE: HELLO AGAIN

visit in October! Just a test card on every channel, or Arlene
Phillips Hello! Yes! Howdy! I'm in LA!

counting beans. I'm so, SO
sorry. It's
strange here. Yesterday was the 4th of July ('Happy Fourth!'), so it was all parties

fireworks on the beach, which was nice. The beach is hilarious. You walk five

Text message from:
Russell minutes from my
house, turn the corner, and there it is. Endless horizons. Palm trees.

Sent: 24-Jun-2009
17:37 All those Venice
Beach dropouts, and muscle men, and tattoos, and henna, and drugs,

Can't I leave you alone for five minutes? and holidaymakers, and Baywatch, and drunks, and burgers, and black kids with ginger

and rollerblades and everything, on my doorstep! The sun is relentless. And there

so many handsome men, you stop fancying them. Literally, you have to or you'd be

all day like a nervous puppy. Very odd.

my apartment is lovely. Apartment' barely covers it. It must be four times the

of my Cardiff flat. And it's so cool - in terms of temperature, I mean - which is

for me. I dreaded coming here and boiling over, but this has got a sea breeze

1 In September 2009, three months after ITV axed the series. It was announced that Primeval had been recommissioned for

two series under a new co-production deal between ITV and digital channel Watch. draughting right through the building, and glass, and patios, and sometimes, just

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S TALE

TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

sometimes, it's even cold. Bliss. I like it. It still feels odd, though. It just feels like I'm new people, new feel. I can't get used to it. But I will persevere.on holiday. Right!

Better do some real work. Love from LA. (There's

Everything is different. The shops are different. The milk is different. The TV no beef in our chicken.)schedules are different. The pace is different. The light is different. It's kind of tiring,

because the simplest thing seems huge. Like, you find a shop to buy your milk -- but then the questions begin. Is this the best shop? Is this what I'll do now? Buy milk here every day? Should I look further? I mean, that's tiny, but when those questions apply to everything, it's a bit wearying. (Never mind the Mac. Now, that's different. I still cannot believe there's no delete key!) But that, I suppose, is the kind of thing I'm doing -- focusing on tiny problems, and making them huge, so I'm not actually looking at the

hugeness of what I've done. Where am I?!

Still, Julie is on good form. Indomitable! She and I have an assistant called Ryan, who is ridiculously handsome. I told her not to get a good-looker, because I'd just find that oppressive. 'No,' she said, 'he's fine. You won't fancy him. He's got a beard.' Well, pah! He's got a beard in the sense that Justin Timberlake has a beard. The bastard.

Oddest of all, the supermarkets here sell chicken sausages. There's a KFC-style advert on TV, in which the company owner proudly declares, 'There's no beef in our chicken!' I'm kind of scared by what that might mean.

The hardest thing is getting used to the hours. The time difference. That's always funny on holiday -- 'Ooh, they're all in bed now!' -- but not when it's work. Being eight hours behind means that when I get up, the UK has had almost a full working day -- and there's still plenty of work to be done back home, with The Sarah Jane Adventures, and the Doctor Who Edits, and trails to organise and stuff, let alone the Torchwood launch. I find 101 e-mails waiting for me each morning, all demanding to be answered before the close of business. I end up sitting here, unshaven, unshowered, bashing out replies while still half-asleep. At the end of the day, the reverse happens - I'm firing off more e-mails, needing instant replies... which never come, because you're all in bed. (Well, not you. I bet you're still up.)

Still, I was recognised last night by none other than the maitre d' of our posh restaurant. 'You're Russell T Davies! I watch Doctor Who! I wait for the Specials!' I admit, that was nice.

And it's Torchwood week in the UK! That's scary. I remember when they offered a five-nighter, I made them stick to that, on transmission... but now it's here, I'm kind

of thinking, it's a bit mad. Five nights in a row? This is asking for disaster. I'm kind of glad that I'm not in the country. The results could be horrific. Will anyone watch? That's one thing I haven't missed in the Doctor Who gap year, the ratings fear!

But I'm not watching any UK telly at all. I could have got a clever machine to send programmes across the world, but then I thought, what's the point? Why go all that way to stay the same culturally? So, that's been very weird. You know how much I love British TV, so it's been like having an arm lopped off. New schedules, new channels,

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DOCTOR **WHO:** **THE** **WRITER'S**
TALE
C
TWENTY-FIVE: THE FINAL CHAPTER

Honestly?
And
if you're too busy to answer, get Ryan to do it.

FROM:
RUSSELL T DAVIES TO: BENJAMIN COOK, SUNDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2009 03:19:10 GMT

RE:
Benjamino!
AN IDEA

It's been a while. How are you? How's Camden? I imagined you'd be away
TWO
MONTHS this
weekend - isn't there a festival on? Reading or the Isle of Wight or one of those?
Obviously
not.

LATER... Lying!
Of course I'm happy to answer (I'm not sure why I didn't in August '08 - I
must
have got distracted)... but everyone lies 27 times a day. That's no surprise. 'Nice
to
see you.' That's just social interaction. That's politics. But when it comes to proper
lying,
then no, I don't think I do. I think that's why I've done well in this business.
People
only lie to make things easier, softer, better - and I don't care much about
that.
I want to make good programmes, that's all, and I'm not sure that happens by
dissembling.
If you don't like some aspect of the production, you've got to tell people
on
the team. All right, you've got a choice about how you tell them - 'I hate it!' might
waste
more of your own time than 'Perhaps there's another way of looking at this' - but
if
you're not straightforward with them, then your entire show will end up bent out
of

shape,

and it's your own fault.

Press,

and PR, and interviews involve lying, but that's only natural, and beneficial,

FROM: BENJAMIN COOK TO: RUSSELL T DAVIES, SATURDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2009 23:39:49 GMT

and

we all know it. When the presenter on BBC Breakfast says, 'Tell us what happens

AN

IDEA

in

David's last episode,' and I say, 'I can't!' - well, that's a lie, because of course I

Russell! In compiling a second year's worth of e-mails for The Writer's Tale 2 (I think can, but imagine if I did blurt out the whole story. That would be hilarious. (Any

we should call it The Writer's Tale: The Final Chapter. Or is that too, er, final? Would interviewer who imagines, as they often do, that they've met the 'real' person is just

people think we've died?!), I realised something... Way back on 1 August last year (at an idiot. There is nothing more artificial than being interviewed about your life by a

2.35am - oh, why didn't we keep more sensible hours?), I asked you about lying. Look, stranger for public consumption.) In the end, the PR stuff is about selling. Even then,

here's the e-mail: you have to protect yourself. Promote something that's rubbish and you look like an

»I want to know more about lying.« idiot, which won't do your career any good. If we'd ever produced an episode of Doctor

See!

Who

that was absolute bollocks, then I'd have been discreetly unavailable for that

»Don't you have to lie all the time in this business? At every press launch, for a week's Confidential. Honestly. And I never, ever had to do that, because every episode

start? In every interview? Even at Tone Meetings? And auditions? And every time that we've made is good. That, in turn, makes you work hard to guarantee that every

you're asked, 'How's the writing going?'...? Isn't writing one big fat lie? Or is that the episode is good, so that you never have to face the consequences of a disaster.

one place where the truth can
out?« Of course, 'are you lying?'
maybe shows how mad it is in Doctor Who World. I

And then I
asked: don't think
you'd ask Jimmy McGovern that, or Paul Abbott, if only for the reason

»How much have you lied over the course of this Great
Correspondence?« that they don't write genre. It's only in this
barmy, enclosed sphere that the notion of

But you never answered. (You bastard.) Now, I know you're in LA, and
you're me 'lying' exists. It's one of the idiocies of fandom, one of the
many, and I'm tired of

probably busy (have you learnt to rollerblade yet? No? Lazy!), but it's the
one having to listen to it. If I deny that the Daleks are coming back, to
protect the show

unanswered question - my one unanswered question - and I'd love you to
answer it. I and the stories, to maintain the surprise, so as not to reveal the
twist -- then I'm a

am, of course, especially interested in the last part, in how much you've lied
during our liar, apparently. And you're asking me to take that seriously?! That's
one thing I won't

two-year correspondence, because, well... it's The Writer's Tale, Russell! Is it the
truth? miss, that insane vocabulary. Having to talk about 'emotion' as a
quantifiable thing in

Yes! No! A version of the truth? Or is it a fiction?

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
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drama. Having to discuss a 'gay agenda' as though it's worth wasting the ten seconds And right at the end, it's there in the Doctor raging at Wilf. Shouting at death.it takes to type it. These stupid words and phrases proliferate, because many of those 'It's not fair!' A whole two hours of galactic-spanning, Time-Lord-killing, Doctor-typing on message boards -- which is a tiny subsection of fandom -- don't have proper changing plot, which is all there for that moment. 'It's not fair!' That's exactly what theoretical faculties, so they leap upon catchphrases as tokens of intelligence, then they Doctor would say. That's how he'd feel. That's how any of us would feel. I wrote theparrot a phrase over and over again, repeated and repeated as though it has validity. It whole thing to find those three words. Because they're true. And do you know what? Iacquires a gloss of validity through its repetition, and it's repeated to the extent that it don't care if people hate 4.18, if they hate the plot, the acting, the sets, the set-up, theleaks out of fandom, and spreads, so I can end up having discussions about this stupid style, the length, the whatever, because there's something so true in that moment, thatbollocks on Radio 4. Time after time, I get asked about shit, and have to talk shit. Ahh, nothing, nothing, can ever stop it from being good.of course I'm lying - every time that I'm polite! As for this Great Correspondence... yes. I think it's true. Or certainly it's one part of

But never mind all that. I think the real heart of your question, and this entire the truth. Sometimes, I read back stuff that I wrote to you ages ago, and think, really?!

project, this entire correspondence, is about writing. And truth, in writing, is the I barely recognise myself. But that's no different to grimacing at your own photo, or

only important thing. That's what it's for. The whole time, every day, all these pages, flinching when you hear your own voice. 'I don't sound like that!' The real truth is, you

all my life, means sitting here looking for something -- some line, some insight, some have five billion ever-changing versions of yourself. These e-mails are just one aspect.

microsecond -- that makes me think: yes. Yes, that's true. That's real. I recognise that. I Imagine if someone asked you to write down everything that you think in the next

know it. That's all I'm after! It might be a truth discovered ten million times before by five minutes. Everything. Every single nuance of every single thought. You'd fill zillions

other people, but that doesn't matter. If you discover it for yourself, then that makes of pages, just in the first 60 seconds. So, this stuff is just one little bit of me. The Writer's

everything worthwhile. No wonder writing is such hard work! You're strip mining

your *Tale is true, and yet it's barely scratching the surface.*

own head, every day, searching for this stuff -- and then those moments of revelation
In the end, this book is a form of writing, and I only write to find out about myself,

are like a
godsend. and I'll only
achieve that if I'm honest... so yes, I stand by these e-mails. Absolutely.

I remember thinking, and thinking, and thinking about Vince in Queer as Folk,
While always thinking of the ones I never wrote.

until I arrived at that crucial conclusion about him, in Episode 8, that because his boyfriend loves him, he thinks less of the boyfriend. Vince cannot love Cameron, because Cameron is stupid to love Vince. That's a great insight. Frankly, that's brilliant! It's devastating. And it's not merely analysis. It decides Vince's character, which then decides the plot, which then becomes the entire climax of the series. The discovery of a truth like that doesn't come along often, though every other moment is spent working towards it.

It's so worth it, when it happens. Oh my word. Gold dust. It feels like vindication. If you want a Doctor Who example, it's there when they all sing the hymn, in the traffic jam, in Gridlock -- because, before writing that, I could have given you a hundred intellectual theories about faith and its origins, but I'd never actually felt it until that moment of writing, when I made them all sing. Or it's there in Aliens of London - that moment when Jackie phones the police to report the Doctor. I love the truth of that moment, that she's so shell-shocked, she betrays her daughter. An incredible thing to do, and very real. It's there in the whole 45 minutes of Midnight, in the accuracy of that group mentality. It's there in that tiny moment in Turn Left, when Donna tells Sylvia that she's tried the army for jobs, but with no luck -- because this is after she's seen the army take her neighbours away to a concentration camp. Donna might well rage in the street, and yet she asks the same army for employment. I really believe that. A true moment of defeat.

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REFERENCED

(1990-1993) - ITV daytime soap, created by Kay Mellor, following two families: the

based in Cheshire, England, and the Stevens, living in Sydney, Australia.
Russell

WORKS

REFERENCED
episodes

wrote various

Grand (1997-1998) - hotel-set ITV period drama written by Russell

All Mine (2004) -- Russell's five-part ITV drama about Max Vivaldi, who believes that the
of Swansea belongs to him - and is proved right!

as Folk (1999) - Russell's Channel 4 drama series chronicling the lives of three men in

gay village around Canal StreetDOCTOR
WHO

as Folk 2 (2000) - two-part TV special concluding the Queer as Folk storyAND
ITS SPIN-OFFS (in chronological
order) *Revelations (1994) -- short-lived*
Granada/Carlton soap opera devised by Russell

Second Coming (2003) -- Russell's two-part ITV drama concerning the realisation of
SteveDoctor Who (1963-present) - an alien known as 'the Doctor', a Time Lord with the
ability to

regenerate into a new body and personality, at least 12 times, in order
to cheat death, travels Baxter (Christopher Eccleston) that he's the
Son of God

through time and space in a ship called the TARDIS, which is disguised
as a London police box. *Why Don't You...? (1973-1995) - BBC children's*
magazine show, which Russell produced and

between 1988 and 1992

The show ran on the BBC from 1963 to 1989, with seven successive
actors playing the Doctor. A

TV movie starring Paul McGann was made in 1996. The show was revived in 2005, produced by

BBC Wales (most of the show is filmed in and around Cardiff), with Russell T Davies as OTHER TV SHOWS DISCUSSED

showrunner:

Series One (2005) - starring Christopher Eccleston, Billie Piper and John Barrowman
The Apprentice (2005-present) -- BBC reality show in which a group of aspiring businessmen

The Christmas Invasion (2005) - Christmas Special, starring David Tennant and Piper and women compete for the chance to win a 100,000-a-year job working for British business

Series Two (2006) -- starring Tennant and Piper
Lord Sugar) magnate Sir Alan Sugar (now

The Runaway Bride (2006) - Christmas Special, starring Tennant and Catherine Tate
Battlestar Galactica (2004--2009) -- a British-Canadian-American military science-fiction TV

Series Three (2007) -- starring Tennant, Freema Agyeman and Barrowman series, and part of the Battlestar Galactica franchise created by Glen A Larson, which started with a

Voyage of the Damned (2007) - Christmas Special, starring Tennant and Kylie Minogue TV show in 1978, followed by a 1980 sequel (Galactica 1980), a re-imagined mini-series in 2003,

Series Four (2008) -- starring Tennant, Tate, Piper, Agyeman, Barrowman and Elisabeth the 2004-2009 series, and a 2100 prequel series (Caprica)

Sladen
Breakfast (2000--present) -- the daily, morning TV news programme on BBC One and the

The Next Doctor (2008) -- starring Tennant and David Morrissey BBC News channel, presented live from TV Centre in White City, West London

Planet of the Dead (2009) - starring Tennant and Michelle Ryan
Blue Peter (1958-present) - BBC magazine programme for children

The Waters of Mars (2009) -- starring Tennant and Lindsay Duncan
Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997-2003) - US drama series, created by Joss Whedon, about a young

The End of Time (2009-2010) - starring Tennant, John Simm and Bernard Cribbins
Doctor woman, Buffy Summers, chosen by fate to battle against

BB

vampires, demons, and the forces of darkness

Who Confidential (2005--present) - BBC Three's behind-the-scenes companion show
Casualty (1986--present) - BBC medical drama, created by Jeremy Brock and Paul Unwin, based

Torchwood (2006--present) -- adult-themed Doctor Who spin-off show, created by Russell,
around the fictional Holby City Hospital

concerning the Cardiff branch of a covert agency, the Torchwood Institute, led by Captain Jack
Charlie Breaker's Screenwipe (2006--present) - BBC Four show, created and presented by Charlie

Harkness (Barrowman), that investigates extraterrestrial incidents on Earth. Series One debuted
Brooker, commentating on the TV industry and reviewing current shows

on BBC Three in 2006, Series Two on BBC Two in 2008, and Series Three in 2009
The Sarah
Coupling (2000-2004) - BBC sitcom, created and written by Steven Moffat, about a group of

Jane Adventures (2007--present) - BBC One's Doctor Who spin-off show for children, created by
thirtysomething friends

Russell, focusing on investigative journalist Sarah Jane Smith (Elisabeth Sladen)
Cranford (2007-present) - BBC comedy-drama written by Heidi Thomas, based on Elizabeth

novel of the same name woven together with two of her other works, set in the fictional

of Cranford in the 1840s

OTHER

SHOWS

on Ice (2006-present) - ITV show created by ice-skating duo Jayne Torvill and

W O R K E D O N B Y R U S S E L L T D A V I E S

Dean, in which celebrities and their professional partners figure skate in front of a

Bob & Rose (2001) -- Russell's six-part ITV romantic drama focusing on a gay man falling in love
panel of judges

with

woman

(2009) -- six-part ITV supernatural drama series, created by Johnny Capps and Julian

following the adventures of London teenager Luke Rutherford, the last

descendant of *Casanova* (2005) -- Russell's three-part BBC drama telling the life of eighteenth-century Italian

Van Helsing line

adventurer Giacomo Casanova (David Tennant)

Housewives (2004--present) -- US drama series, created by Marc Cherry, following the *Coronation Street* (1960-present) - ITV soap, created by Tony Warren, set in a fictional street

in Lancashire. Russell was a storyliner in the mid 1990s, also writing the direct-to-video *Special* lives of a group of women, seen through the eyes of their dead neighbour, and the secrets that lie

the surface of suburbia

Viva Las Vegas

Doors (2003--2004) - BBC sitcom, created and written by Craig Cash and Phil Mealey, set in *Dark Season* (1991) -- Russell's six-part BBC teen drama telling of the adventures of three a small pub, The Grapes, in Manchester

adolescents and their battle to save their school from the actions of the sinister Mr Eldritch

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DOCTOR	WHO:	THE	WRITER'S
TALE			
REFERENCED			

EastEnders (1985-present) - BBC soap, created by Julia Smith and Tony Holland, set in the
The Royle Family (1998-present) - BBC sitcom, created by Caroline Aherne and Craig Cash, about

fictional Albert Square in the East End of London the working-class Royle family, who rarely do anything other than watch television, chat, eat,

and drink*Fawlty Towers* (1975-1979) - BBC sitcom, created and written by John Cleese and Connie Booth,

(2007-present) - E4/Channel 4 drama, created by Bryan Elsley and Jamie Brittain, about a set in a fictional Torquay hotel

of sixth-formers growing up in Bristol*Give Us a Clue* (1979-1997) - ITV's gameshow version of charades, which ran until 1992; BBC

South Bank Show (1978-present) - ITV arts magazine show

One attempted a revived version in 1997

Star Trek: Enterprise (2001-2005) - US science-fiction series, created by Brannon Braga and Rick High School Musical (2006) -- US TV movie musical, written by Peter Barsocchini and made

Berman and set in the Star Trek universe created by Gene Roddenberry, following the adventures

by the Disney Channel, concerning students and rival cliques at a fictional high school in New of the first Warp 5 starship, Enterprise, ten years before the formation of the United Federation of

Mexico shown in previous Star Trek series*I, Claudius* (1976) - BBC adaptation of Robert Graves' /, *Claudius and Claudius the God novels*, *Star Wars* (set to debut in 2012) - US science-fiction series, yet to be given an official title, focusing

scripted by Jack Pulman on characters from the galaxy of the Star Wars movies

Jekyll (2007) - six-part BBC drama series, written by Steven Moffat, starring James Nesbitt as a *Supernatural* (2005--present) -- US supernatural drama series, created by Eric Kripke, following two

modern-day descendant of Dr Jekyll, who has begun transforming into a version of Mr Hyde brothers who hunt demons and other paranormal figures

Longford (2006) - one-off Channel 4 drama, written by Peter Morgan, about Moors Murderers Ian
Teletubbies (1997-2001) - BBC series for pre-school children; created and written by Anne Wood

Brady and Myra
Hindley CBE and
Andrew Davenport

the Night (2009) - Saturday night BBC talent and variety show, presented by John
Making Of Me: John Barrowman (2008) - Barrowman challenges scientists to explain why he

is gay, in one of the BBC's The Making of Me series of science documentaries

(1988-1989) - short-lived Saturday morning BBC children's TV show
A Matter of Loaf and Death (2008) -- the fourth motion-clay animated TV short to feature man-

XFactor (2004-present) - ITV talent show contested by aspiring pop singers

and-his-dog double act Wallace and Gromit, written by Nick Park and Bob Baker, in which the

iconic characters -- created by Park - have started a bakery business and are embroiled in a murder

mystery

DISCUSSED Merlin (2008--present) -- BBC fantasy drama, created by Julian Jones, Jake Michie, Johnny Capps

and Julian Murphy, re-imagining the Camelot legend to focus on Merlin as a young wizard and
2010 (1984) - science-fiction film written by Peter Hyams and based on the novel by Arthur C

set nine years after the mysterious failure of the Discovery mission to Jupiter as depicted in
his clashes with an adolescent Arthur

movie 2001: A Space Odyssey

Most Haunted (2002-present) - Living TV show based on investigating purported paranormal

and the Beast (1991) - animated Disney movie, written by Linda Woolverton, based on the activity

of the same name about a beautiful woman kept in a castle by a horrific monster
The National Television Awards (1995-present) - the most prominent British TV awards for
Being John Malkovich (1999) - a comedy drama written by Charlie Kaufman, in which a puppeteer

which the general public votes on the results. The ceremony is sponsored by ITV, and was held
takes a filing job in a Manhattan office, where he discovers a door that

allows him to enter the

annually in October until 2008. No NTAs were held in 2009 so that, from 2010, the ceremony

could take place in

January.

Dangerous Liaisons (1988) -- based on a play, by Christopher Hampton, about eighteenth-century Neighbours (1985-present) - Australian soap opera, created by Reg Watson, set in Ramsay Street, a French aristocracy; in turn based on eighteenth-century novel Les Liaisons dangereuses by Pierre

cul-de-sac in the fictional suburb of

Erinsborough Choderlos de Laclos***Only Fools and Horses (1981-2003) - BBC sitcom, created and written by John Sullivan, focusing The Dark Knight (2008) - directed and co-written by Christopher Nolan, and based on the DC***

on brothers Derek and Rodney Trotter's attempts to get rich Comics character Batman (played here by Christian Bale, opposite Heath Ledger as the evil Joker),***Party Animals (2007) - BBC Two drama series telling the story of researchers, lobbyists and MPs this superhero movie is a sequel to 2005's Batman Begins***

in

Parliament

Finding Nemo (2003) - computer-animated Pixar movie, written by Andrew Stanton, Bob Peterson

David Reynolds, telling the story of a clownfish, Marlin, search for his son, Nemo***The People's Quiz (2007) - BBC Saturday-night quiz show (full title: The National Lottery People's***

(1978) - film musical about students at the fictional Rydell High School in 1959. Written by

Quiz), hosted by Jamie Theakston

Woodard, and based on Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey's 1972 musical of the same name***Pop Idol (2001--2003) -- ITV talent show contested by aspiring pop singers***

Great Mouse Detective (1986) -- animated Disney movie based on the children's book series Primeval (2007-present) - ITV sci-fi drama, created by Adrian Hodges and Tim Haines, about a

of Baker Street by Eve Titus. It draws heavily on the tradition of Sherlock Holmes, with a

team of scientists that investigates anomalies in time and deals with creatures that travel through

mouse who consciously emulates the detective***The Real Hustle (2006-present) - BBC Three series demonstrating confidence tricks, distraction***

(1988) - comedy movie, written and directed by John Waters, revolving around plump

scams and proposition bets, performed on members of the public by presenters Alexis Conran,

Tracy Turnblad as she simultaneously pursues stardom as a dancer and rallies against

Paul Wilson and Jessica-Jane Clement

segregation. In 2002, Hairspray was adapted into a Broadway musical, and a movie remake *Reckless: The Sequel (1998) - Paul Abbot's sequel to his own ITV drama Reckless, concerning die*

released in 2007

love affair between a mid-30s surgeon, Owen (Robson Green), and the late-40s, estranged wife of a

Creepers 2 (2003) - horror movie, directed and written by Victor Salva. The movie is a

prominent doctor in the hospital where he works

Richard & Judy's New Position (2008-2009) - a topical primetime chat show, broadcast on UKTV

digital channel Watch, fronted by husband and wife Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan, who hosted a

similar show (Richard & Judy), broadcast in the early evening on Channel Four, from 2001 to 2008.

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DOCTOR WHO: THE WRITER'S
TALE
REFERENCED

sequel to the earlier Jeepers
Creepers **Doctor Who: The
Highest Science (1993) - an original Doctor Who novel featuring the Seventh**

**The Little Mermaid (1989) - animated Disney movie, written by Roger Aliens, Ron
Clements and** Doctor, written by Gareth Roberts, and published as part of
Virgin Books' The New Adventures

John Musker, based on a fairytale of the same name by Hans Christian Anderson. It
concerns a range

young mermaid willing to give up her life in the sea as a mermaid to gain a human soul
and the 'Eleonora' (1842) - short story by Edgar Allan Poe, considered by
many biographers to be

love of a human
prince autobiographical

**M (1931) -- German thriller directed by Fritz Lang, and written by Lang and his wife
Thea von Goldilocks and the Three Bears - fairy tale that first became widely
known in 1837 when Robert**

Herbou, centred on Hans Beckett (played by Peter Lorre), a serial killer who preys on
children in Southey composed it as a prose story, The Story of the Three Bears,
collected in his book The

1930s
Berlin Doctor,
although it was probably based on an even older story in the oral tradition

**Mamma Mia! The Movie (2008) - a big-screen adaptation of the 1999 West End
musical of the Hamlet (1599-1601) - a play written by William
Shakespeare, telling how Prince Hamlet of**

same name, written by Catherine Johnson and based on the songs of
ABBA Denmark exacts revenge on his uncle for the
murder of his father. The exact year of writing **The Matrix Reloaded (2003) - the second
instalment in The Matrix trilogy of science-fiction** remains in
dispute adventure movies, starring Keanu Reeves, written and directed by brothers Laurence
'Larry' **Harry Potter (1997-2007) - a series of seven fantasy novels, written
by JK Rowling, about the** Wachowski and Andrew 'Andy' Wachowski.

of the eponymous adolescent wizard The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy (1979) -
the **Monsters, Inc. (2001) - computer-animated Pixar movie, set in a city inhabited by
monsters and** first of a series of five science-fiction novels

powered by the screams of

children (published between 1979 and 1992) written by Douglas Adams, concerning an eccentric

The Poseidon Adventure (1972) - concerns the capsizing of a fictional ocean liner, and the struggles electronic travel guide. The novel was adapted from Adams' radio comedy of the same name,

of a handful of survivors to reach the bottom of the hull before the ship sinks. It is scripted by broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in 1978. In later years, the franchise became a TV series (1981), a

Wendell Mayes and Stirling Silliphant, and based on a novel by Paul Gallico. The movie has been computer game (1984), comic books (1993--1996) and a Hollywood-funded feature film (2005)

remade twice: as a television special in 2005, with the same name, and a theatrical release, Poseidon, ***How I Write: The Secret Lives of Authors (2007) - an anthology of writings by various provocative***

in
2006

includes letters, essays, photographs and memorabilia; edited by Dan Crowe and Philip

Silence of the Lambs (1991) - horror thriller starring Jodie Foster and Anthony Hopkins, based Oltermann

on the novel of the same name by Thomas Harris, his second to feature Dr Hannibal Lecter, a ***The Little Engine That Could (1930) - a moralistic children's story that originated in the USA,***

brilliant psychiatrist and cannibalistic serial killer. teaching the value of optimism and hard work. A brief version was published (under the title

The Simpsons Movie (2007) - animated movie based on TV sitcom/cartoon series The Simpsons, *Thinking One Can* in 1906, in *Wellsprings for Young People*, a Sunday school publication, but

created by Matt Groening, following the lives of the residents of the fictional US town of Springfield the best-known incarnation of the story, The Little Engine That Could, appeared in 1930 and

Sliding Doors (1998) -- concerning the life of a woman who's fired from her job; the plot then splits attributed Mabel C Bragg as the author

into two parallel universes, which run in tandem. It is written and directed by Peter Howitt ***The Old Devils (1986) - Booker Prize-winning novel, written by Kingsley Amis, about an author***

Thoroughly Modern Millie (1967) - a musical comedy, starring Julie Andrews and written by who returns to his native Wales and begins associating with a group of former friends, all of

Richard Morris, partly set in a New York

author

hotel
locally while he was away

whom have continued to live

Wall-E (2008) - computer-animated Pixar movie, written and directed by Andrew Stanton
Peer Gynt (1867) - a play, written in verse, by Henrik Ibsen

(screenplay by Jim Reardon), following the story of a robot, Wall-E, who is designed to clean up a **Prisoner of Trebekistan (2005) -- a book by Bob Harris, about Alex Trebek, presenter of US quiz**

waste-covered Earth of the far
future show Jeopardy

Characters in Search of an Author (1921) - play written by Luigi Pirandello. During

OTHER WORKS
DISCUSSED rehearsals
for a play, six characters turn up and insist on being given life

Titanic (1998) - a computer game designed by Douglas Adams and made by The Digital

Asterix and the Laurel Wreath (1972) - the eighteenth volume of the Asterix comic book series
Village, of which Adams was a founding member. The game takes place on a spaceship called the

(original French title: Les Lauriers de Cesar), by Rene Goscinny (stories) and Albert Uderzo
Titanic, which has crash-landed on Earth

(illustrations), following the exploits of a village of ancient Gauls as they resist Roman occupation
Ten Little Niggers (1939) - detective novel by Agatha Christie (later editions re-titled And Then

Chain Reaction (1991-present) - host-less chat show, first broadcast on BBC Radio 5 in 1991,
There Were None), about ten people, trapped on an island, killed according to an old nursery

then revived on BBC Radio 4 in 2005. Each week, a famous name interviews another famous rhyme

name; and the interviewee goes on to be the following week's interviewer

The Cherry Orchard (1904) - Anton Chekhov's last play, concerning a once-wealthy family as they

return to their estate in Russia shortly before it is auctioned off

The Chris Moyles Show (2004-present) - BBC Radio 1 breakfast show

A Christmas Carol (1843) - novella by Charles Dickens, telling the Victorian morality tale of

miserly Ebenezer Scrooge, who undergoes profound redemption over the course of one night as

four ghosts visit him

Death in the Clouds (1935) -- mystery novel by Agatha Christie, featuring Belgian detective

Hercule Poirot

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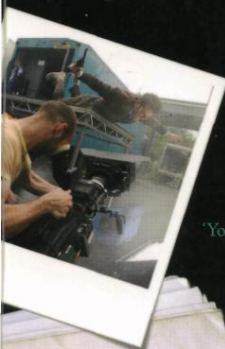


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ISBN 978-1-846-07861-3



Cover design: Clayton Hickman
Cover photography: Adrian Rogers
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